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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE JEWEL OF INDIA

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"GANDHI SERIES" NO. 1

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
—THE JEWEL OF INDIA

By

M. K. GANDHI

EDITED & PUBLISHED

By

ANAND T. HINGORANI



1960

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	xi
1. EXTERNMENT FROM MUSSOORIE	1
2. WILL SIR LUDOVIC PORTER APOLOGIZE?	3
3. JAWAHARLAL'S MESSAGE	4
4. A LAME REPLY	5
5. 'GOING TOO FAST'	6
6. GRAVE DIFFERENCES	7
7. THAT TIME IS NOT YET	9
8. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH	10
9. THE CONGRESS CROWN	11
10. A ROSE SMELLS JUST AS SWEET	12
11. POLICE ASSAULT ON JAWAHARLAL	13
12. JAWAHARLAL HAS NO SECRETS	15
13. ARTLESSNESS OR AUDACITY?	17
14. JAWAHARLAL'S LETTERS TO INDIRA	23
15. WHO SHOULD WEAR THE CROWN?	24
16. YOUTH ORGANIZATION	27
17. THE CONGRESS HELMSMAN	28
18. 'HOW SHALL I CONSOLE YOU?'	29
19. U. P. NATIONAL SERVICE	30
20. A NOBLE AND WORTHY SON'	31
21. LAHORE CONGRESS IMPRESSIONS	32
22. ON THE EVE OF THE DANDI MARCH	34
23. MOTILALJI'S MUNIFICENCE	34
24. CHIEF SERVANT OF THE NATION	34
25. WORKED LIKE A TROJAN	35
26. PRESIDENT'S REWARD	35
27. JAWAHARLAL ON PROBLEM OF MINORITIES	36
28. PLEA FOR ECONOMY IN NATIONAL EXPENDITURE	39
29. PLACATING JAWAHARLAL?	40
30. A COUNTRYMAN'S ADVICE	41
31. NO CLASH OF PRINCIPLE	44

	PAGE
32. GOD IS GREAT	45
33. 'CAN'T WE COPE WITH IT?'	46
34. ALONE, YET NOT ALONE	47
35. AT JAWAHARLAL'S COLLEGE	49
36. THE DEATH DANCE	49
37. TOO BIG FOR INTELLECTUAL EFFORT	51
38. 'MY LOVE AND THOUGHTS ARE WITH YOU'	52
39. JAWAHARLAL-GANDHI CORRESPONDENCE	53
40. NO FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE	57
41. SOCIALISM AND JAWAHARLAL	58
42. CONVICTION OF PANDIT NEHRU	59
43. 'A TALK WITH TWO SOCIALISTS'	60
44. ADVICE TO THE ZAMINDARS	61
45. A GREAT NATIONAL LOSS	62
46. 'MAY EVERYTHING BE WELL WITH YOU!'	62
47. TWO OUTSTANDING TRAITS	63
48. A FALSE ALARM	67
49. FOR KHADI WEARERS	69
50. A TRAGI-COMEDY	69
51. ARE WE RIVALS?	71
52. MY FEELING ABOUT NEHRU	73
53. 'MAKE ME UNDERSTAND'	74
54. 'LIKE KING CANUTE'	75
55. CONVERSION BY PATIENT PERSUASION	76
56. LIFE IS ITS OWN EXPRESSION	78
57. MEANING AND MESSAGE OF CHARKHA	79
58. DIFFERENCES ON SOCIALISM	80
59. KHADI IN SWADESHI EXHIBITIONS	80
60. JAWAHARLAL'S BELIEF IN CLASS WAR	83
61. 'DON'T SMILE OR BE ANGRY'	84
62. THE FUNCTION OF CONGRESS MINISTRIES	85
63. HINDU-URDU CONTROVERSY	85
64. 'LIVERY OF OUR FREEDOM'	87
65. KHADI MENTALITY	88
66. ABOUT THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM	88
67. HINDI-URDU QUESTION	90
68. THE PRESIDENT'S BEREAVEMENT	93
69. TWO STURDY SPIRITS	94

	PAGE
70. ECONOMY OF ABUNDANCE	95
71. JAWAHARLAL AND NON-VIOLENCE	96
72. FEDERATION	96
73. MY FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE WITH SOCIALISTS	98
74. THE WAR RESOLUTION	98
75. CONGRESS AND THE PRINCES	99
76. WORKING COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT	99
77. NO DIVIDED COUNSELS	101
78. FUTILITY OF ARMAMENTS	102
79. VIVISECTION OF INDIA	102
80. KAMALA NEHRU MEMORIAL	103
81. THE ONLY WAY	104
82. BAFFLING SITUATION	106
83. NON-VIOLENCE AND CONGRESSMEN	107
84. PROGRESS TOWARDS AHIMSA	108
85. DEFINITION OF SWARAJ	109
86. EVILS INHERENT IN INDUSTRIALISM	110
87. WHEN VIRTUE BECOMES VICE	110
88. NO TURNING BACK	112
89. ON BARDOLI RESOLUTION	113
90. FUTURE PROGRAMME	116
91. INDIRA NEHRU'S ENGAGEMENT	117
92. SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND SELF-RELIANCE	118
93. JAWAHARLAL—MY HEIR	119
94. MY CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM	120
95. A TRIPLE TRAGEDY	122
96. ADVICE TO KHADI WORKERS	122
97. INEFFECTIVE SYMPATHY	123
98. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S PRESS NOTE	123
JAWAHARLAL vs. GANDHIJI'S DRAFT	132
APPENDIX I (<i>Draft No. 1</i>)	133
APPENDIX II (<i>A.-I.C.C. Resolution</i>)	135
99. 'DISHONOURABLE TACTICS'	138
100. NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF	139
101. ON 'QUIT INDIA' RESOLUTION	142
102. 'STAND ALONE'	143
103. WORLD FEDERATION	144
104. FROM A LETTER TO MARSHALL CHIANG-KAI-SHEK	146

	PAGE
105. JAWAHARLAL—A JEWEL AMONG MEN	146
106. FIROZ KHAN NOON'S ALLEGATIONS	146
107. AS GOOD A NATIONALIST AS INTERNATIONALIST ..	147
108. DIFFERENCE OF OUTLOOK	148
109. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA	153
110. SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK	154
111. SILENT REVOLUTION'	154
112. 'FOLLOW PANDIT NEHRU'S ADVICE'	155
113. JAWAHARLAL'S VISIT TO KASHMIR	155
114. INDIA'S JAWAHAR	157
115. SUCCESS OF THE NEW TEAM	158
116. NO BED OF ROSES	159
117. 'PLAYING THE GAME'	159
118. 'PLACE OF PRINCES IN INDEPENDENT INDIA' ..	160
119. 'NEHRU—OUR UNCROWNED KING'	162
120. 'A FOOLISH WASTE OF MONEY'	163
121. 'INDIA'S DUTY TO HELP'	164
122. RUMBLINGS FROM BIHAR	164
123. SETTING THE CLOCK BACKWARD	166
124. 'THAT IS JAWAHARLAL !'	167
125. 'YOUR AFFECTION IS EXTRAORDINARY'	169
126. FIRST SERVANT OF THE CONGRESS	170
127. CROWNING ACT OF MY LIFE'	170
128. MR. ATTLEE'S DECLARATION	171
129. 'OMIT ME FROM YOUR CONSIDERATION'	173
130. ASIAN INSTITUTE	175
131. JAWAHARLAL'S DREAM OF UNITED ASIA	177
132. 'I AM A PRISONER OF NEHRU'	177
133. A FALSE REPORT	178
134. WHEN EVERYTHING AT THE TOP GOES WRONG ..	178
135. 'MY LIFE'S WORK SEEMS TO BE OVER'	179
136. QUALITY OF DISCIPLINE	181
137. OUR DUTY	182
138. HOME-TRUTHS TO COMMUNISTS	183
139. TWO NATIONS?	184
140. TRANSPARENT AS CRYSTAL	185
141. CHOICE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL	186

969 C

	PAGE
142. CORRESPONDENCE ON KASHMIR VISIT	187
<i>Maharaja Hari Singh to Lord Mountbatten</i> ..	188
<i>Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji</i>	188
<i>Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji</i>	189
<i>Gandhiji to Lord Mountbatten</i>	190
<i>Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji</i>	191
<i>Pandit Nehru to Gandhiji</i>	191
143. IN FULFILMENT OF A PROMISE	192
144. REPORT OF KASHMIR VISIT	194
145. ABOUT THE USE OF VICEREGAL PALACE	195
146. IS THE TRI-COLOUR GONE?	196
147. CRUMBLING HEAVENS	197
148. A NINE DAYS' WONDER	202
149. IF ONLY JINNAH HAD ACCEPTED MY OFFER ..	203
150. THE CITY OF THE DEAD	204
151. JAWAHARLAL—A REAL JEWEL	205
152. DUTY OF BANISHING HATRED	205
153. HELPING HANDS AT HARVESTING	206
154. THE KINGDOM OF GOD	207
155. THE JEWEL OF INDIA !	207
156. THE SWARAJ GOVERNMENT	208
157. PRIME MINISTER'S NOBLE GESTURE	208
158. PANDIT NEHRU'S EXAMPLE	209
INDEX	211

PREFACE

Jawaharlal Nehru is the idol of our youth and the darling of our nation. There is something indefinable, something irresistible and even something elusive about his unique personality which instinctively draws crowds in hundreds and thousands around him not only in his own country, but in other countries as well. "Why are people touched, as if by magic, wherever Jawaharlal goes?" asks Gandhiji. "They sometimes do not even know he has come, and yet they take sudden fire from the very thought that he is coming." Answering the question himself, he says: "There is a subtle influence and it is unquestionably there, call it by what name you like. People do not want to hear him, they simply want to see him. And that is natural. You cannot deal with millions in any other way."

This 'subtle influence', which Jawaharlal Nehru happily possesses in an ample measure, he has been exercising over the vast masses of his countrymen continuously for the last several decades, more particularly so since the Lahore Congress of 1929 when, for the first time and at a comparatively young age of 40, he was elected to wear the Congress crown—the highest honour that a nation could bestow on its beloved leader. This Congress crown was, however, in the words of Gandhiji, "all thorns and no roses", and, in recommending Jawaharlal's name for it, Gandhiji knew he was recommending a person who would not wince wearing it even though his head be bruised. In a rich and rare tribute that he paid to Jawaharlal on that memorable occasion, Gandhiji said:

"In bravery, he is not to be surpassed. Who can excel him in the love of the country? 'He is rash and impetuous', say some. This quality is an added qualification at the present moment. And if he has the dash and rashness of a warrior, he has also the prudence of a statesman. A lover of discipline, he has shown himself to be capable of rigidly submitting to it even when it has seemed irksome. He is undoubtedly an extremist, thinking far

ahead of his surroundings. But he is humble and practical enough not to force the pace to the breaking point.

"He is pure as the crystal ; he is truthful beyond suspicion. He is a knight *sans peur, sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands."

And verily the nation did remain safe in his hands not only for the period of one year of his stewardship of the Congress, but has continued to remain so ever afterwards, too. Since then, Jawaharlal has worn this selfsame 'crown of thorns' many a time and each time that he has worn it, not only his stature has gone up tremendously but he has added more and more lustre to the high office to which he has been repeatedly called by the nation. Like a Colossus, he is today striding the political stage without a peer. In sheer intellectual brilliance, honesty of purpose, selfless service, catholicity of mind, breadth of vision and personal magnetism, he stands supreme amongst the present-day leaders of India.

In the golden texture of India's recent history, no two glorious names are more closely interwoven than those of Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru. The mention of one inevitably recalls to one's mind that of another. Yet it cannot be said that there were no fundamental differences between them in their outlook on life and its problems. The differences were there alright and indeed not a few, but in spite of them all there was a heart union between the two which nothing could break. Unkind critics, however, were not wanting who tried to insinuate that they were both rivals of each other. Refuting this unwarranted charge, Gandhiji said :

"I cannot think of myself as a rival to Jawaharlal or him to me. Or if we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal. And if, in the joint work for reaching the goal, we at times seem to be taking different routes, I hope the world will find that we had lost sight of each other only for the moment, and only to meet again with greater mutual attraction and affection."

And we all know how this 'mutual attraction and affection' eventually ripened into 'mutual admiration and love' and that, too, of such an ennobling and enduring kind that it successfully

survived even the severest strain imposed upon it by many a serious crisis in our country's march towards freedom, and by the attainment of that very freedom itself when the great tragedy of the Partition took place.

Referring to a persistent suggestion that Jawaharlal and he were estranged, Gandhiji once remarked :

"It will require much more than differences of opinion to estrange us. We have had differences from the moment we became co-workers, and yet I have said for some years and say now that not Rajaji but Jawaharlal will be my successor. He says he does not understand my language, and that he speaks a language foreign to me. This may or may not be true. But language is no bar to a union of hearts. And I know this that when I am gone, he will speak my language."

Who can deny that Gandhiji's prophecy in this respect has not been largely fulfilled? Those who are familiar with Jawaharlal's utterances and activities after Gandhiji's passing away, will bear ungrudging testimony to the fact that he has worthily carried the mantle of Gandhiji as his chosen political heir and successor, and has even tried to speak, as nearly as possible, the language of his Master.

Gandhiji bore an extraordinary love for Jawaharlal, and this love peeps out from every page of this book. Often would he speak about Jawaharlal with a sort of a fatherly pride and say : "Jawahar is a real *Jawahar* (Jewel)" and that "he is a jewel in fact as well as in name." On one occasion he described him as "a jewel among men" and said : "Happy is the land that owns him." After the achievement of independence and Jawaharlal's assumption of an exalted office of the Prime Minister, Gandhiji invariably used to refer to Jawaharlal as "our uncrowned king", and plead with the people to extend their fullest co-operation to him in the administration of the country. In one of his post-prayer speeches, Gandhiji said :

"Our uncrowned king is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He is working, slaving for us, not as a king but as our first servant. It is his desire through the service of India to serve the world. Jawaharlal is an international figure

and he has friendly relations with all the foreign ambassadors who are now in India. But it is not possible for Jawaharlal alone to govern, if the people by their indiscipline spoiled the work. He could not, as did the former autocrats, resort to the rule of the sword. That would be neither *Panchayat Raj* nor *Jawahar Raj*. It is, therefore, the duty of everyone to make the task of Ministers easy, and not force their hands in any way."

It is indeed our great good fortune that we have a man like Jawaharlal at the helm of our national affairs, a man whose incorruptibility of mind and spirit is acknowledged on all hands, a man whose utter fearlessness has unfailingly triumphed over many an ugly situation, and whose 'bravery, determination, application, integrity and grit' have made him the beloved of the entire nation. In him the oppressed and the suppressed of humanity have found a powerful champion of their cause. Jawaharlal's love for peace and his enunciation of the doctrine of *Panch Sheel* and its successful practice in the face of even the gravest provocations, has won for him the universal esteem and affection of all men of goodwill. His voice is today listened to with utmost respect and attention in all the Chancellories of the world. Gandhiji knew his sterling worth. From the beginning of his association with Jawaharlal till the last moment of his life, Gandhiji had nothing but abundance of love and blessings for his political heir. Even in his last letter, he wrote to him to say: "May you live for many long years and continue to be the *Jawahar* (Jewel) of India!" This blessing of Gandhiji, I am sure, will find spontaneous echo in every Indian heart.

ANAND T. HINGORANI

7, Edmonstone Road

Allahabad

15th June, 1960

EXTERMENT FROM MUSSOORIE

The P. Government have provided me with an excellent illustration of unwise and intemperate action almost, if not altogether amounting to insanity. I refer to the externment from Mussoorie of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the son of the Hon. Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's dignified letter to the Superintendent of Police furnishes the public with all the facts in connection with the order served on him. The whole of the Allahabad public could bear witness, if witnesses to the action of an unreasonable man were necessary, that Mr. Nehru junior was proceeding with his mother, his sisters and his ailing wife to Mussoorie purely for reasons of health. Having inquired of him, having received an unequivocal, straightforward and full explanation of his presence in Mussoorie, having the knowledge that the members of the family were with him in Mussoorie, the authorities ought to have accepted Mr. Nehru's word and refrained from taking further action. It should be remembered that Mr. Nehru in his letter to the Superintendent of Police said :

"I have no concern with the Afghan Delegation and it was an accident that we both happened to be in the same hotel. As a matter of fact, their presence here has put me out to a certain extent as I was looking forward to taking possession of the rooms at present occupied by them. I am, of course, interested in the Delegation as every intelligent person must be, but I had or have not the slightest intention of going out of my way to meet them. We have been here now for the last seventeen days and during this period I have not seen a single member of the Delegation even from a distance. You are yourself aware of this fact as you told me this morning."

This was not enough for authorities. They had lost their mental balance. They wanted an assurance that Mr. Jawa-

harlal Nehru would not have any communication with the Delegation, for we learn from the same letter :—

“But although I have no intention whatever of seeing the Afghans or of having any communication with them, I utterly dislike the idea of binding myself down to any course of action at the instance of the Government, even though such action may not prove irksome. It is really a question of principle or conscience. You will, I feel sure, appreciate my position.”

And the Government whom Mr. Oakes, the Superintendent of Police, represented, appreciated the position by serving on him the order of externment two days after the receipt of the letter. Mr. Nehru was anxious that the Government should have the full facts before them, therefore told them in the same letter:

“If the Government chooses to serve any order on me, I am, for the present, prepared to obey it. It will be a great inconvenience to me to go down suddenly and leave my family by themselves here. The condition of my wife's health requires the most careful attention and my mother is a confirmed invalid and it is most difficult to leave them uncared for. My sudden departure will upset my father's and my plans entirely and cause us any amount of trouble and anxiety. But I suppose individual conveniences cannot be considered in high matters of State.”

In a well-regulated State, individual inconvenience is as much a ‘high matter of State’ as any other, except when individual welfare demonstrably requires to be sacrificed to corporate welfare. In this instance, there was nothing, so far as the public are aware, to warrant the inhumanity of tearing a husband from his ailing wife and separating an aged mother from her only son and protector, when they have no one else to look after them and are away from home. I call this insanity of a very severe type and it can only proceed from a guilty conscience. The Government knows that the peace terms are dishonourable and in breach of the pledges of Ministers. They know, too, that the Mohammedan sentiment has been deeply hurt. They know that the Hindu sympathy is completely with them and they know that the Afghan Delegation is also in complete accord with the Indian

Mohammedan feeling. They are, therefore, afraid of any Indian of importance being in the position of knowing anything of or from the Afghan Delegation. The Government have, therefore, become hyper-suspicious.

But we must not answer this madness with madness. I am loath to think that the Government of Sir Harcourt Butler desires to goad the people to violence so that he can repeat the frightfulness of the Punjab and terrorize the people into silence and submission. But whether it is the intention of the Government to do so or not, the leaders of the *Khilafat* movement must prepare themselves for more acts of the Mussoorie type. And the way to success lies not in becoming angry, but in welcoming such acts of repression so that they may, ceasing to produce any effect upon those against whom they are directed, cease altogether even as a medicine that does not react upon a patient is necessarily stopped by the administering physician. The severest punishment is stopped as soon as it fails to produce the effect intended.

— *Young India* : May 26, 1920.

2. WILL SIR LUDOVIC PORTER APOLOGIZE ?

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes as follows about the charge brought against him:

"Sir Ludovic Porter, Finance Member of the Government of the United Provinces, is reported to have made the following remarks in his speech delivered in the U.P. Council on 23rd January, 1922:

'I allude to Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. His final effort was a speech somewhere in the West of the Provinces in which he quoted word by word the sedition section, *i.e.*, the promotion of disaffection against the Government as by law established, and the section which deals with promoting hatred between classes of his Majesty's subjects, and he said that the object of his life was to carry out this promotion of sedition and disaffection.'

"This is incorrect. On no occasion and in no speech have I quoted the sedition section or any other section

of the Penal Code word by word or in any other manner. I do not carry about a copy of the Indian Penal Code with me, and I have not thought it worth while to learn any of its sections by heart. What I have stated, however, on more than one occasion, is that I considered it my business, as it was the business of every Indian, to promote disaffection against the present system of government in India. And I was thus continually sinning against section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code. I have never, I trust, said anything which might lead people to think that I desire to promote 'hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects.' I have endeavoured to the best of my ability, whenever an occasion offered itself, to do the very reverse of this. And, indeed, if it were otherwise, I would be a bad non-co-operator and utterly unworthy of being a humble follower of the great leader whose mission it is to demonstrate anew to the world the invincible might of Love and Truth."

It never occurred to these officials who have libelled the character of two honourable public men* that if they have preached or approved of violence, the charges should be fully proved against them by incontestable evidence. Will Sir William Vincent apologize to Maulana Bari and Sir Ludovic Porter to Pandit Jawaharlal ?

— *Young India* : February 9, 1922.

3. JAWAHARLAL'S MESSAGE

Pandit Jawaharlal (and others) have been prematurely released from the Lucknow Jail. It is evident that the revising judge appointed by the U.P. Government has come to the conclusion that the convictions were wrong. God only knows how many of these convictions are totally wrong. But the plain fact today is that prisoners, rather than feeling glad over their discharges, are really grieved. Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions have my sympathy. The unregistered *Independent* publishes the following message from him :

* The other 'honourable public man' referred to is Maulana Abdul Bari.

"What message can I give? I have been released. I don't know why. My father, a victim of asthma, and hundreds of my co-workers lie still in jail. I feel I have no right to be out of it. All I can say is : Fight on, work on for a Free India. Let there be no respite, no forsaking of principles for a false compromise. Follow our great leader Mahatma Gandhi and be true to the Congress. Be efficient, organized and, above all, remember the *Charkha* and Non-violence."

— *Young India* : March 9, 1922.

4. A LAME REPLY

It will be remembered that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to the Administrator of Nabha on the 25th July, 1924, telling him that he knew nothing of any conditions being applied to his discharge before the expiry of sentence. It has taken the Administrator twenty-seven days to send the following reply:

"I would refer you to your letter dated the 25th July last. I may mention that you are under a misapprehension with regard to the meaning of the word 'suspension.' The suspension of a sentence obviously implies conditions. If this were not the case and if your argument was sound, the suspension of a sentence without the mention of any conditions would be equivalent to remission which is obviously incorrect.

"Under these circumstances, I see no good purpose in continuing this correspondence."

It is all very well to lecture to Pandit Jawaharlal on the meaning of the word 'suspension.' Unfortunately for the Administrator, however, the Pandit did not ask him to tell him what the word 'suspension' meant, but he wanted to know why he was not told of the conditions of his discharge. Is not a prisoner entitled to know the conditions of his discharge upon 'suspension' of his sentence? May the Administrator be also informed that a remission may also carry conditions? The Administrator's reply, therefore, carries with it its own condemnation, because it proves by implication that the Pandit

was not informed of the conditions of the suspension of his sentence. And, to all intents and purposes, he is even now ignorant of the conditions. Thus, is he liable to be imprisoned under the old sentence if he enters the Nabha territory even after the completion of two years after the date of his sentence? The Administrator may 'see no good purpose in continuing this (the) correspondence.' But the public is entitled to know not only the conditions of 'suspension' but, what is more important, whether it is not a fact that Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions were not informed of any conditions being attached to their discharge and whether, if that be so, the imprisonment of Acharya Gidwani can be justified on any ground whatsoever.

— *Young India* : September 11, 1924.

5. 'GOING TOO FAST'

[Pandit Jawaharlal returned from Europe in December, 1927, and went straight to the Madras session of the Indian National Congress. A number of resolutions were passed there at his instance. This letter was written by Gandhiji because he did not approve of some of his activities at this session.]

NOT REVISED

*Satyagraha Ashram,
Sabarmati,*

January 4, 1928.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I feel that you love me too well to resent what I am about to write. In any case, I love you too well to restrain my pen when I feel I must write.

You are going too fast. You should have taken time to think and become acclimatized. Most of the resolutions you framed and got carried could have been delayed for one year. Your plunging into the 'Republic Army' was a hasty step. But I do not mind these acts of yours so much as I mind your encouraging mischief-makers and hooligans. I do not know whether you still believe in unadulterated non-violence. But even if you have altered your views, you could not think that unlicensed and unbridled violence is going to deliver the

country. If careful observation of the country in the light of your European experiences convinces you of the error of the current ways and means, by all means enforce your own views but do please form a disciplined party. You know the Cawnpore experiences. In every struggle, bands of men who should submit to discipline are needed. You seem to be overlooking this factor in being careless about your instruments.

If I can advise you, now that you are the Working Secretary of the I.N.C.,* it is your duty to devote your whole energy to the central resolution, *i.e.*, Unity and the important but secondary resolution, *i.e.*, boycott of the Simon Commission. The Unity Resolution requires the use of all your great gifts of organization and persuasion.

I have no time to elaborate my points but *verbum sapienti*.

I hope Kamala is keeping as well as in Europe.

Yours,
BAPU

—Mahatma : Vol. VIII, p. 349.

6. GRAVE DIFFERENCES

*The Ashram, Sabarmati,
January 17, 1928.*

My dear Jawaharlal,

I must dictate and save time and give rest to my aching shoulder. I wrote to you on Sunday about Fenner Brockway. I hope you got that letter in due time,

Do you know that it was because you were the chief partner in the transactions referred to that I wrote the articles you have criticized, except, of course, about the so-called 'All-India Exhibition'? I felt a kind of safety that, in view of the relations between you and me, my writings would be taken in the spirit in which they were written. However, I see that they were a misfire all-round. I do not mind it. For, it is evident that the articles alone could deliver you from the self-suppression under which you have been labouring

* Indian National Congress.

apparently for so many years. Though I was beginning to detect some differences in viewpoint between you and me, I had no notion whatsoever of the terrible extent of these differences. Whilst you were heroically suppressing yourself for the sake of the nation and in the belief that by working with and under me in spite of yourself, you would serve the nation and come out scatheless, you were chafing under the burden of this unnatural self-suppression. And, while you were in that state, you overlooked the very things which appear to you now as my serious blemishes. I could show you from the pages of *Young India* equally strong articles written by me, when I was actively guiding the Congress, with reference to the doings of the All-India Congress Committee. I have spoken similarly at the All-India Congress Committee meetings whenever there has been irresponsible and hasty talk of action. But, whilst you were under stupefaction, these things did not jar on you as they do now. And it seems to me, therefore, useless to show you the discrepancies in your letter. What I am now concerned with is future action.

If any freedom is required from me I give you all the freedom you may need from the humble, unquestioning allegiance that you have given me for all these years and which I value all the more for the knowledge I have now gained of your state. I see quite clearly that you must carry an open warfare against me and my views. For, if I am wrong, I am evidently doing irreparable harm to the country and it is your duty after having known it to rise in revolt against me. Or, if you have any doubt as to the correctness of your conclusions, I shall gladly discuss them with you personally.

The differences between you and me appear to me to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us. I can't conceal from you my grief that I should lose a comrade so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest as you have always been; but in serving a cause, comradeships have got to be sacrificed. The cause must be held superior to all such considerations. But this dissolution of comradeship—if dissolution must come—in no way affects our personal intimacy. We have long become members of the same family, and we remain such in spite of grave political differences. I have the good fortune to enjoy such relations

with several people. To take Sastri,* for instance. He and I differ in the political outlook as poles asunder, but the bond between him and me that sprung up before we knew the political differences, has persisted and survived the fiery ordeals it had to go through.

I suggest a dignified way of unfurling your banner. Write to me a letter for publication showing your differences. I shall print it in *Young India* and write a brief reply. Your first letter I destroyed after reading and replying to it; the second I am keeping, and if you do not want to take the trouble of writing another letter, I am prepared to publish the letter that is before me. I am not aware of any offensive passage in it. But if I find any, you may depend upon my removing every such passage. I consider that letter to be a frank and honest document.

With love,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 350.

7. THAT TIME IS NOT YET

Satyagraha Ashram,

Sabarmati,

April 1, 1928.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I have your letter,

The enclosed copies will tell you what progress is now being made in the negotiations with the mill-owners. I, however, agree with you that nothing will come out of them at the present moment. But the negotiations may fructify in due occasion. There was a time, when the mill-owners were absolutely opposed about boycott and the *Khadi* propaganda. I shall write to you again after these negotiations are finished.

Though Romain Rolland's first expected letter has arrived and he warmly looks forward to my proposed visit, it does not enable me to come to a decision. As the time for arriving at a fixed decision is drawing nearer, my diffidence is

* Srinivasa Sastri.

growing. There may be, however, a cable from Rolland next week and it may decide my fate. Meanwhile, there is no going to Singapore. I am fixed up here for the time being. If I do not go to Europe, I am due to go to Burma and pass there two months, going to a hill-side and making collections during my stay there.

I am quite of your opinion that some day we shall have to start an intensive movement without the rich people and without the vocal educated class. But that time is not yet.

You do not tell me where Kamala is to pass the summer months.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

—*Mahatma* . Vol. VIII, p. 351.

8. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH

*The Ashram, Sabarmati,
April 4, 1928.*

My dear Jawahar,

I have your letter. I do not remember Father* having told me that he would be back in Bombay to confer with the mill-owners during the last week of this month. But he and I discussed the question of foreign cloth boycott at length and we had a conference with Seth Lalji, Shantikumar, and Seths Ambalal, Kasturbhai and Mangaldas. It was a good conference, but nothing definite was done. I have now definitely heard that the mill-owners are going to start their own Swadeshi League, which means, of course, that we are not coming to any terms.

I had a long discussion with Lalaji† today, for he was here for two days. He is enthusiastic about the boycott of foreign cloth. I have supplied him with literature. He even suggested that I should invite a few leaders and confer with them about boycott. I told him that I had not the courage to do so. He is of opinion that if intense boycott propaganda

* Pandit Motilal Nehru.

† Lala Lajpat Rai.

is to be taken up, I must not go out of the country, wherein, of course, I agree; but I cannot take up intense propaganda, unless politically-minded India is whole-heartedly with me and unless the agitation about "temporary boycott of the British goods, principally of British cloth," is given up. We have, therefore, come to this provisional arrangement that if anything concrete takes place by spontaneous action on the part of the known leaders, I should give up the idea of going to Europe. On the other hand, if nothing of that kind happens and if otherwise I see my way clear, I should proceed and that Lalaji and others who are minded like him should cultivate an atmosphere for intense propaganda about foreign cloth boycott with or without the assistance of mills. I, therefore, suggest that you should confer with Dr. Ansari and others—I suppose they will all go to the Punjab—and pass the resolution about foreign cloth boycott through *Khadi*. I would warn you against any mention of indigenous mill cloth. You can simply say: "Whereas the only effective means of immediately demonstrating the united strength of the nation lies through boycott of foreign cloth, this conference urges all concerned completely to boycott foreign cloth and adopt handspun and hand-woven *Khadi*, even though such adoption may necessitate revision of one's taste about dress and some pecuniary sacrifice."

You will also let me know the result of private discussion you may have with friends and advise me as to whether I should give up the idea of going to Europe. Dr. Ansari should really be able to decide.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

—Mahatma : Vol. VIII, p. 352.

9. THE CONGRESS CROWN

The Congress Crown has ceased to be a Crown of Roses. The rose petals are year by year falling off and the thorns are becoming more and more prominent. Who should wear such a crown? Father or the son? Pandit Motilalji, the weather-beaten warrior or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the dis-

ciplined young soldier who by his sterling worth has captured the imagination of the youth of the country? Sjt. Vallabh-bhai Patel's name is naturally on everybody's lips. Pandit says in a private letter that he, as the hero of the hour, should be elected and the Government should be made to know that he enjoys the fullest confidence of the nation. Sjt. Vallabh-bhai is, however, out of the question just now. His hands are too full to allow of his attention being diverted from Bardoli. And before December (1928) comes upon us, he may be a guest in one of His Majesty's innumerable prisons.

My own feeling in the matter is that Pandit Jawaharlal should wear the Crown. The future must be for the youth of the country. But Bengal wants Motilalji to guide the Congress barque through the perilous seas that threaten to overwhelm us during the coming year. We are torn within and are encircled by an enemy that is as unscrupulous as he is powerful. Bengal has special need of an older head and one, moreover, who has proved a tower of strength to her in the hour of her trial. If India, as a whole, has no easy time before her, Bengal has still less.

There are a thousand reasons why Panditji should be chosen to wear the Crown of Thorns. He is brave, he is generous, he enjoys the confidence of all parties, Mussalmans acknowledge him as their friend, he commands the respect of his opponents and often bends them to his view by his forceful eloquence. He has, moreover, deep down in him a spirit of conciliation and compromise which makes him an eminently worthy ambassador of a nation that is in need of and is in the mood to take an honourable compromise. It is these considerations which actuate even the dare-all Bengal patriot to want Pandit Motilal Nehru as the helmsman for the coming year. Let the impatient youth of the country wait a while. They will be all the stronger for the waiting.

— *Young India* : July 26, 1928.

10. A ROSE SMELLS JUST AS SWEET

Pandit Motilalji is today the proudest man in India and has every reason to be so. But even he could have done

nothing if everyone had not conspired to make the proceedings* a success. It would have been easy for the Hindus or the Mussalmans to block the way. The Sikhs could have done likewise. But no one had the heart to destroy the patient labours of the Nehru Committee. Little wonder that Pandit Malaviyaji, the irrepressible optimist, said that *Swaraj* would be attained in 1930.

There is still much diplomatic work to be done. But more than the diplomatic work is that of forging the sanction. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru truly observed that whether it was Dominion Status or Independence, a proper sanction would be necessary if the national demand was to be enforced. Bardoli has shown the way, if the sanction has to be non-violent. The Congress creed has non-violence as its integral part. There is no denying the fact that non-violence had receded in the background before Bardoli. But even as the Nehru Report has made a unanimous demand possible, Bardoli has brought back the vanishing faith in non-violence.

If, then, we are sure of the sanction, we need not worry whether *Swaraj* is otherwise spelt Dominion Status or Independence. Dominion Status can easily become more than Independence, if we have sanction to back it. Independence can easily become a farce, if it lacks sanction. What is in a name if we have the reality? A rose smells just as sweet, whether you know it by that name or any other. Let us, therefore, make up our minds as to whether it is to be non-violence or violence and let the rank and file work for the sanction in real earnest, even as the diplomats must work at constitution-making.

— *Young India* : September 6, 1928.

11. POLICE ASSAULT ON JAWAHARLAL

The certificate granted by the Punjab Government to the police seems to have emboldened the Lucknow police to outdo the Punjab police in the free use of the baton and the spear. The Lucknow police seem, according to Pandit Jawaharlal

* The reference is to the proceedings of the Nehru Committee appointed by the Congress to draw up the *Swaraj* constitution.—*Ed.*

Nehru, to have used brickbats in order to dispense an utterly innocent crowd. Granted that the processionists were defying orders supposed to be legal, the police, I hold, were not justified in charging the processionists unless injury on the part of the latter to person or property was imminent. I rely implicitly on Pandit Jawaharlal's narrative. According to it, the crowd was orderly and well-behaved. It was not out to do any harm to anybody. Its motive was known to be a peaceful demonstration against the entry into Lucknow of a Commission* that has been imposed upon the people against their will. The exercise by the police of punitive powers in such circumstances was arbitrary, uncalled for and brutal. The behaviour of the crowd, in the face of this provocation and in the face of a cowardly assault upon their chosen leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his companions, was amazingly exemplary. Their self-restraint was as great as their leaders'. I claim that no crowd outside India would have retained the calmness that the Lucknow crowd did.

But this calmness is probably mistaken for cowardice by the brave Commissioners who, under the protecting wing of an armed police, seem to be bent upon continuing their blood-red progress. Innocent blood was spilt in the Punjab and severe injuries seem to have been inflicted by the police in Lucknow on an equally innocent crowd. Two men are said to have been so badly injured as to be in danger of losing their lives. Difficult as the conduct of the English Commissioners is to understand, that of their subordinate Indian colleagues is still more difficult to understand. They do not seem to perceive the widening gulf between them and the people, whom they are supposed to represent and whom (some of them flower of the nation) they are content to see trampled under horses' hoofs, charged with batons and driven with spearheads like cattle for the heinous offence of daring to demonstrate against this unwelcome Commission.

Well did the enraged father and patriot, Pandit Motilal Nehru, give a warning to the Government, that "if a violent disturbance takes place in this city or any other part of the country, the responsibility for that would fall upon such

* The Simon Commission.

officials as misbehaved themselves for the last three days at Lucknow." My fear is that the Government do not mind, if they would not actually welcome, such a disturbance. If a disturbance takes place, they will have another opportunity of showing the red claws of the British Lion and of terrorizing a docile people into abject submission to their imperious will. For, if the Government do not desire an outbreak of violence on the part of the people and if the Commission will persist in their peregrinations, they should notify to the latter that they should, instead of going from place to place, summon witnesses to a central place and finish their work. But such wisdom and consideration for popular will are hardly to be expected of the Government.

The duty before the people is clear, to continue their non-violence in the face of the gravest provocation. Then, one may safely regard these great demonstrations as so many lessons in non-violence preparatory to the final struggle in which people will willingly and valiantly lay down their lives without the slightest retaliation. That day is fast coming, faster than most of us imagine. So far as I can see, sacrifice of precious lives will have to be made before we come to our own, whether in a struggle wholly non-violent or predominantly violent. I am hoping and praying that non-violence will be maintained even up to the last heat.

— *Young India* : December 6, 1928.

12. JAWAHARLAL HAS NO SECRETS

Describing the incidents at Lucknow in a private letter, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes :

"An incident which took place yesterday morning might interest you. I have not mentioned it in my statement. Soon after the mounted and foot police had driven us back near the station, a young man, whom I took to be a student, came to me and said that he could bring me two revolvers immediately if I wanted to use them. We had just experienced the baton and *lathi* charges, and there was a great deal of anger and resentment in the crowd. I suppose he thought that it was a favourable

moment to make the offer. I told him not to be foolish. Soon after, I found out quite casually that this particular person was known to be in the C.I.D."

Pandit Jawaharlal was safe as he has no secrets. If he finds any use of revolvers in his scheme for the freedom of the country, he will not need the offer from an outsider to lend him one. He will carry it himself openly and use it effectively when, in his opinion, the occasion has arrived. So, he was safe from the blandishments of the C.I.D. And what applies to Pandit Jawaharlal applies in a measure to all Congressmen. For, happily, the Congress politics abhor secrecy. Congressmen have ceased to talk with closed doors; they have shed the fear of the C.I.D.

But the C.I.D. will not be itself if it does not have emissaries whose business, among other things, it is to expose people to temptations and entrap them in the nets prepared for them. It is difficult to imagine an occupation more debasing and degrading than this, and yet it has been reduced to a science by the chief governments of the world and has attracted to it some of its cleverest brains. Britain takes, perhaps, the first place in this occupation. Lying in the C.I.D. is cultivated as a fine art. Ponsonby's *Falsehood in War Time* gives a painful record of lying on the part of all the Powers that were engaged in the pastime of mutual destruction on the false plea of philanthropy. It is a black record of crimes committed by the nations of whom Britain was not the least, but probably the greatest, offender. She could have stopped the War, if she had been less greedy and less selfish.

Wherever you turn in India, you encounter pitfalls. To me every institution — be it the most philanthropic — run by and in the name of the Empire in India, has an unmistakable taint about it. That we run to and hug most or some of them is no test of their goodness. It is a test of our helplessness, short-sightedness or selfishness. We have not the courage to sacrifice much in order to save ourselves from criminal participation in sustaining an Empire which is based on fraud and force, and whose chief, if not one, aim is to perpetuate the policy of ever-growing exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth.

In a way, the C.I.D. is the least dangerous of the traps so cleverly laid by the builders. Those whose exterior is attractive are really the most dangerous of all. We often fall into one of these enticing but deadly traps, before we hardly know where we are. It is for some such reason that the Romans said : 'Beware of the Greeks, specially when they bring you gifts.' When an enemy comes to you bearing the look of philanthropy, he is to be most dreaded. Would that the youth of the country learnt this simple truth and avoided the pitfalls into which they daily fall, even whilst they are cursing the Empire and hoping to deliver the country from the intolerable yoke which is not only ruining the nation economically, but is also causing unfathomable moral mischief.

—*Young India* : December 13, 1928.

13. ARTLESSNESS OR AUDACITY ?

The following correspondence will be read with interest :

Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow,

Gonda,

June 19, 1929.

Sir,

I write to draw your attention to the famine in Gonda. In the north of the district over an area containing half a million people, famine has been formally declared, while in other parts there is terrible poverty. Relief works on roads and tanks began in early January, and will continue until the rains compel their closure. Fifty thousand people have been working on the relief works ; those too old or ill to work are receiving gratuitous relief. The organization needed to carry out this work is elaborate and costly. Government are spending lakhs on famine relief, have suspended and remitted large amounts of revenue and are giving about three lakhs for advances of rice seed for cultivators. They have done their part and the public are beginning to do theirs. I need money to relieve poverty outside the famine area, and am receiving subscriptions from private persons.

I appeal to you as to an organization which claims to promote the country's welfare, not only political but also social and economic. I cannot believe that once these facts are brought to your notice you will ignore the claims of the largest district in Oudh, and the most famine-stricken district in the U.P. You have many sympathies ; you have promised £100 to the League against Imperialism ; will you not give as much to the League against starvation ?

Prominent members of the Congress are collecting funds to save from prison thirty-one alleged Communists at Meerut ; will you not do the same to save from famine five lakhs of hungry men at Gonda ?

Moreover, if you wish to further two causes — charity and politics — at a single stroke, will you send me all the foreign clothes you collect ? I will despatch them to this wild tract on the Nepal border, where they will no longer be an eyesore to good patriots. If you commute the sentence on European clothes from burning to banishment, I guarantee that they will never return. You will not, I think, wish any longer to burn clothes when you realize that there are thousands of your countrymen wearing rags which are too scant even for decency. True patriotism is to help your fellow-countrymen in their need, and I appeal to you for a generous contribution both of money and clothes.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) B. J. K. HALLOWES

President,

Famine Relief Fund,

Gonda.

The Secretary,

All-India Congress Committee.

* * * * *

B. J. K. HALLOWES, Esq.,
President, Famine Relief Fund,
Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow,
Gonda (U.P.)

Sir,

Your letter of the 19th June was delivered to me on the evening of the 24th June. I am afraid I have no authority to make grants out of Congress funds. Only the Working Committee of the Congress can do so. If you so desire it, I shall place your request before the Committee at their next meeting.

Conditions in the district of Gonda and in its neighbouring district of Bahraich are terrible enough. Indeed, many other districts in the Province are little better. You say in your letter that Government have done their part in relieving this distress and it is for private persons and organizations to do their share. In the face of an appalling catastrophe, as in the case of a critical illness, immediate relief measures have necessarily to be undertaken. But you will no doubt appreciate that such measures have a temporary significance only. They neither cure the disease of the social group, nor of the individual. To find the remedy, you have to search for the causes of the distemper and to remove them.

Is it not a strange and disconcerting fact that such terrible famines should occur with more and more frequency, and even in the intervals scarcity, twin brother to famine, should prevail? And is it at all surprising that continued starvation should result in the 'resistance of the people' being 'seriously weakened', as the recent communique of the U.P. Government puts it? Surely, there must be something very seriously wrong somewhere in the machinery of the State or the structure of society or both.

The days when we could cast the blame on the gods for all our ills are past. Modern science claims to have curbed to a large extent the tyranny and the vagaries of Nature, to have increased production and to have introduced swifter methods of transportation and communica-

tion. And yet, in spite of all this progress, India faces, almost continually, famine and scarcity and her condition becomes steadily worse.

Your relief works must bring some solace, however temporary, to many. They are certainly to be appreciated. But do you not think that all this charitable relief does not touch even the fringe of the problem of Indian poverty? For, the problem is one of poverty not of failure of rains or other natural calamity. You do not ask me to send you food, but money. There is enough food in the country and enough of trains and conveyances to carry it to every famine area. But there is no money to buy it. How and why this state has arisen and how it can be remedied, are vital questions which we must answer. Probably, your method of tackling these questions is different from ours. But it is certain that the charity of the wealthy does not put down poverty, and famine-relief measures do not put an end to conditions which cause famines.

The whole *raison d'être* of the National Congress is to put an end to such terrible conditions by removing the root causes. The Congress is convinced that only by changing the whole system of government and the structure of society can poverty be conquered and a measure of social well-being introduced. The Congress, therefore, fights for this change and in so doing faces a considerable measure of risk and suffering. And it is for this reason that the Congress associates itself with other organizations, like the League against Imperialism, which also attack the root cause of poverty and inequality.

If the Government, at present functioning in India, were really desirous of attacking and eradicating poverty, they would do something much more and vastly different from the petty relief they give in times of acute distress. They would feel that in a country, where there is such terrible poverty, it is a tragic absurdity to have an expensive and top heavy system of administration. They would feel that the whole political and economic system they have built up in the country, and the social structure

they have bolstered up, have impoverished the country with great efficiency and rapidity, and this process continues. They would realize that the responsibility for this poverty is theirs, and, therefore, the speediest way of ending it is to remove themselves from the scene of action, liquidate their government and make room for others who can tackle the problem with greater disinterestedness and competence than they have shown.

I cannot believe that anyone, who has given some thought to this question, can fail to arrive at this conclusion. Your sympathy for the poverty-stricken will not end by giving them temporary relief. You will want a surer remedy giving more permanent results than the quack's nostrum. I trust that you will appreciate that this sure remedy lies in the complete replacement of the present system of government and a change in the social structure. Believing this to be the only right way which promises a measure of comfort and happiness to our suffering countrymen, the National Congress has determined to follow this path. Your co-operation, moral and material, as well as the co-operation of all others who object to the exploitation of a country or a people or a class by other, will be welcome.

I might add that, so far as immediate relief measures in case of urgent necessity are concerned, the Congress has in the past given such relief either directly or through its associate organization, the All-India Spinners' Association. The Congress believes that even temporary relief should take the form of teaching an auxiliary industry to agriculture, which will provide an immediate income now and a welcome addition in better times. Every person taking this form of relief is a permanent gainer thereby, and his spare time which was wasted gets converted into yarn and cloth and money. The method of organizing this kind of relief is to encourage carding and hand-spinning by lending and distributing spinning wheels and cotton. Hand-weaving, of course, automatically benefits by this. If you appreciate this kind of relief and are prepared to

co-operate with it, I shall gladly recommend to the All-India Spinners' Association to do what they can in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
General Secretary.

It is difficult to believe that the Deputy Commissioner's letter is seriously meant. It reads more like a veiled sermon to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru than a request for help. If it is a sincere request for help, the reference to the League against Imperialism, the Meerut prisoners and the foreign clothes' burning are irrelevant, if not impertinent. The Deputy Commissioner has got the answer he deserved. His request is like that of an army of occupation asking for help from comparatively better off victims for the worse off, when both could be immediately relieved if the army removed the pressure by withdrawing itself. And why should Government officials expect help from organizations like the Congress, which have their own method of dealing with famines and the like? The writer of the letter forgets that Congressmen who desire boycott of foreign cloth cannot consistently give it even to the famine-stricken. It will be, in their opinion, to perpetuate the state of starvation. Foreign cloth is believed by them to be one of the most potent causes of India's poverty. To make use of that cloth, even in times of distress, is to put off the day of relief from starvation.

—*Young India* : July 18, 1929.

14. JAWAHARLAL'S LETTERS TO INDIRA

I

*On the train,
July 29, 1929.*

My dear Jawaharlal,

Your letters to Indu* are excellent and should be published. I wish you could have written them in Hindi. Even as it is, there should be a simultaneous publication in Hindi.

Your treatment of the subject is quite 'orthodox. The origin of man is now a debatable subject. The origin of religion is a still more debatable matter. But these differences do not detract from the value of your letters. They have a value derived not from the truth of your conclusions, but from the manner of treatment and from the fact that you have tried to reach Indu's heart and open the eyes of her understanding in the midst of your external activities.

I did not want to strive with Kamala over the watch I have taken away. I could not resist the love behind the gift. But the watch will still be kept as a trust for Indu. In the midst of so many little ruffians about me, I could not keep such a piece of furniture. I would, therefore, be glad to know that Kamala will reconcile herself to Indu getting back her darling watch.

My article on the Congress Crown is already written. It will be out in the next issue of *Y.I.* †

Yours,
BAPU

*Smt. Indira Gandhi, affectionately called Indu.

†Young India.

Aug. 7, 1929.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I do not like the title *Dawn of History*. 'Father's Letters to His Daughter' may be a better title than letters to Indira, though I do not mind the latter.

I wish Kamala would be freed from these recurring pains. I should risk the operation, if the doctors would perform it.

I am keeping the clock under lock and key and shall bring it on my coming there.

I go to Bombay on August 11th to meet Jinnah. I admire Sarojini Devi's optimism. But I am going to Bombay with much hope.

Yours,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 354.

15. WHO SHOULD WEAR THE CROWN?

The occupation of the Congress chair is becoming more and more onerous year after year. It is a serious question who should wear the Crown for the next year. It is all thorns and no roses. I have noticed my name as one of the possibilities. When I first saw it amongst the nominees of some committee, I did not treat it seriously. But now I find friends speaking to me seriously and pressing me even to ask for the Crown, even if it is not offered to me. I need not discuss here the reasons advanced in favour of the proposal. I admit the weightiness of some of them. I have given them all the consideration I was capable of giving them, but I must own I have neither the courage nor the confidence in my ability to shoulder the burden. I feel that I have become almost unfit for attending to the details of office work which I must do, as is my nature, if I accepted the office. I know, too, that I am not keeping pace with the march of events. There is, therefore, a hiatus between the rising generation and me. I

look a back number in their company. Not that I believe myself to be a back number. But when it comes to working in their midst, I know that I must take a back seat and allow the surging wave to pass over me. I have mentioned two decisive reasons for my reluctance to shoulder the burden. There are others which I do not put in the same category as these. But I hold these two as sufficient to eliminate me from the list of nominees.

In my opinion, the Crown must be worn by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. If I could have influenced the decision, he would have occupied the chair even for this year. But the imperative demand of Bengal compelled the senior partner to capitulate.

Older men have had their innings. The battle of the future has to be fought by younger men and women. And it is but meet that they are led by one of themselves. Older men should yield with grace what will be taken from them by force, if they do not read the signs of the times. Responsibility will mellow and sober the youth, and prepare them for the burden they must discharge. Pandit Jawaharlal has everything to recommend him. He has for years discharged with singular ability and devotion the office of secretary of the Congress. By his bravery, determination, application, integrity and grit, he has captivated the imagination of the youth of the land. He has come in touch with labour and the peasantry. His close acquaintance with European politics is a great asset in enabling him to assess ours.

But say the older heads : 'When we are likely to have to enter into delicate negotiations with various groups and parties outside the Congress, when we might even have to deal with British diplomacy, when we have yet the Hindu-Muslim knot to undo, we must have some one like you as the head.' In so far as there is force in this argument, it is sufficiently answered by my drawing attention to the fact that whatever special qualities I may possess in the direction indicated, I shall be able to exercise more effectively by remaining detached from and untrammelled by, than by holding office. So long as I retain the affection and the confidence of our people, there is not the slightest danger of my not being able without

holding office to make the fullest use of such powers as I may possess. God has enabled me to affect the life of the country since 1920 without the necessity of holding office. I am not aware that my capacity for service was a whit enhanced by my becoming President of the Congress at Belgaum.

And those who know the relations that subsist between Jawaharlal and me, know that his being in the chair is as good as my being in it. We may have intellectual differences, but our hearts are one. And with all his youthful impetuositities, his sense of stern discipline and loyalty make him an inestimable comrade in whom one can put the most implicit faith.

Will not Jawaharlal's name be a red rag to the English bull?—whispers another critic. We give English statesmen little credit for commonsense and diplomatic skill and betray less faith in ourselves when we think like the imaginary critic. If a decision is really right for us, it ought to be right for the whole world. If in choosing our President we have to take into consideration what English statesmen will think of our choice, we show little courage of our convictions. Personally, I have a higher estimate of English character than that assumed by the critic. The Englishman prizes honesty, bravery, grit and outspokenness, all of which Jawaharlal has in abundance. Even if, therefore, British statesmen are to be considered in making choice, Pandit Jawaharlal suffers from no disqualification.

Lastly, a President of the Congress is not an autocrat. He is a representative working under a well-defined constitution and well-known traditions. He can no more impose his views on the people than the English King. The Congress is a forty-five-year old organization and has a status above its most distinguished Presidents. And it is the Congress, as a whole, with which, when the time is ripe, British statesmen will have to deal. They know this probably better than we do. All things considered, therefore, my advice to those concerned is to cease to think of me and to call Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the high office with the fullest confidence and hope.

—*Young India* : August 1, 1929.

16. YOUTH ORGANIZATION

"The fateful 1st of January 1930 is approaching fast, but you are still harping on your incantatory formula of '*Khadi*, *Khadi* and again *Khadi*,' and refuse to give any effective lead to the country. I, for one, have no stomach left for this 'hand-spun' war-cry of yours, and I believe it has begun to get on the nerves of the country, too. Why not give a mandate to youthful leaders, like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose, to raise a force of one crore national volunteers who would be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of the country?"

I am sorry to say that even if *Khadi* gets on one's nerves, as it is alleged by the correspondent to do, I have no other remedy to suggest in its place. I cannot conceive of *Swaraj* without *Khadi*, for the simple reason, that without it the lot of the peasantry is bound to remain precarious in India, and it constitutes more than eight-tenths of her entire population.

Nor is it true to say, that the country is utterly fed up with *Khadi*, and that *Khadi* has begun to get on the people's nerves. It may be so in the case of handful of town-dwellers of India, but they do not constitute India. India's city-dwelling population, in the midst of the teeming millions of her villages, is as a drop in the ocean. The foundation of India's nationality is to be laid not in her towns but in her villages, and the only movement that is at present actively going on among India's villages is that of *Khadi*. It is expanding.

It is a gratuitous insult to Pandit Jawaharlal or Subhash Chandra Bose to say that they are awaiting my permission or mandate to organize the youth of the country, and are being kept back for want of it. They are already doing the work of organization to the best of their power and ability. They need no permission from me for doing their part. If they are true soldiers, as I believe they are, I could not hold them back if I could. But the plain, painful fact of the matter is that today, not to talk of one crore volunteers, there are not ten thousand who are prepared completely to sacrifice themselves

for duty's sake. I know that they can get ready in no time if they wish, but the will to do is lacking. You cannot get *Swaraj* by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work; what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former.

—*Young India* : September 5, 1929.

17. THE CONGRESS HELMSMAN

It was a great and wise step the All-India Congress Committee took at Lucknow on 29th ultimo in electing Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Congress helmsman for the coming year. No man, however great, be he even a *Mahatma*, is indispensable for a nation conscious of itself and bent upon freedom. Even as the whole is always greater than its part, the Congress which claims to represent the nation is always greater than its greatest part. To be a living organization, it must survive its most distinguished members. The All-India Congress Committee has by its decision demonstrated that it believes in the inherent vitality of the Congress.

Some fear in this transference of power from the old to the young, the doom of the Congress. I do not. The doom was to be feared from the sceptre being held by paralytic hands as mine are at present. I may take the reader into the secret that before recommending Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's name for the burden, I had ascertained from him whether he felt himself strong enough to bear the weight. 'If it is thrust upon me, I hope, I shall not wince,' was the characteristic reply.

In bravery, he is not to be surpassed.

Who can excel him in the love of the country?

'He is rash and impetuous, say some. This quality is an additional qualification at the present moment. And if he has the dash and rashness of a warrior, he has also the prudence of a statesman.

A lover of discipline, he has shown himself to be capable of rigidly submitting to it even where it has seemed irksome.

He is undoubtedly an extremist, thinking far ahead of

his surroundings. But he is humble and practical enough not to force the pace to the breaking point.

He is pure as the crystal, he is truthful beyond suspicion.

He is a knight *sans peur, sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands.

But the youth are on their trial. This has been a year for the youth's awakening. Theirs undoubtedly was the largest contribution to the brilliant success of the Simon Commission boycott. They may take the election of Jawaharlal Nehru as a tribute to their service. But the youth may not rest on their laurels. They have to march many more stages before the nation comes to its own. Steam becomes a mighty power only when it allows itself to be imprisoned in a strong little reservoir, and produces tremendous motion and carries huge weights by permitting itself a tiny and measured outlet. Even so have the youth of the country of their own free will to allow their inexhaustible energy to be imprisoned, controlled and set free in strictly measured and required quantities.

This appointment of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Captain is proof of the trust the nation reposes in its youth. Jawaharlal alone can do little. The youth of the country must be his arms and his eyes. Let them prove worthy of the trust.

—*Young India* : October 3, 1929.

18. 'HOW SHALL I CONSOLE YOU?'

Aligarh,

Nov. 4, 1929.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I have just got your letter. How shall I console you? Hearing others describe your state, I said to myself : 'Have I been guilty of putting undue pressure on you?' I have always believed you to be above undue pressure. I have always honoured your resistance. It has always been honourable. Acting under that belief, I pressed my suit. Let this incident be a lesson. Resist me always when my suggestion does not appeal to your head or heart. I shall not love you the less for that resistance.

But why are you dejected? I hope there is no fear of public opinion in you. If you have done nothing wrong, why dejection? The ideal of independence is not in conflict with greater freedom. As an executive officer now and President for the coming year, you could not keep yourself away from a collected act of the majority of your colleagues. In my opinion, your signature was logical, wise and otherwise correct. I hope, therefore, that you will get over your dejection and resume your unfailing cheerfulness.

The statement you may certainly make. But there is no hurry about it at all.

Here are copies of two cables just received. Please show them to Father, too.

If you feel like talking things over with me, do not hesitate to catch me wherever you like.

I hope to see Kamala hale and hearty when I reach Allahabad.

If you can, do wire that the blues are over.

Yours,
BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 354.

19. U. P. NATIONAL SERVICE

It was a happy idea of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, during my recent tour, to ask for funds for forming a national service for the province. Rs. 12,036-15-9 were collected for the purpose. Though the sum is not adequate for the purpose intended, it is a goodly sum as a nucleus. The idea of having a national service is not new. Ever since 1920, it has been before the country. But Pandit Jawaharlal has given it a shape and a habitation.

National work must suffer so long as we have to depend upon volunteers who give only a part of their time and that too by fits and starts. Permanent work requires permanent whole time workers. This can best be done by each province establishing its service in accordance with its needs and out of funds collected locally.

Feeling hampered at every step for want of trained and tried permanent workers, Pandit Jawaharlal seized the opportunity that the tour gave him of getting funds. I hope now that no time will be lost in framing rules and inviting applications. Untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, boycott of foreign cloth, total prohibition, national education, etc., can absorb a large number of permanent workers. Indeed, our ideal should be to have at least one worker to every one of the seven hundred thousand villages.

—*Young India* : December 12, 1929.

20. A NOBLE AND WORTHY SON

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru more than justified the choice of the people. His address, brief and to the point was bold, extreme in conception but moderate in expression. It bore evidence of a man capable of viewing things with complete detachment. A confirmed Socialist, he wants for his country what only the country can manage. He is a practical statesman, tempering his ideals to suit his surroundings. But for himself, he is an idealist who would ever strive to live up to his ideals.

As in his address, so in the chair. He was strong, yet accommodating. His wit came to his rescue on many an awkward occasion. He never hesitated when action was required. His tireless energy and entire self-forgetfulness, his natural simplicity and affability captivated every one. No Government, that is at all anxious to do what is right, can have any reason to fear Jawaharlal Nehru. A wicked Government would soon feel the strength of a stalwart who counts no price too dear to pay for ridding the country of wicked rule.

The youth of the country have every reason to be proud of their representative. The nation may well rejoice to find in Jawaharlal Nehru such a noble and worthy son. May God's

blessings descend upon him and may the nation reach her destination during Jawaharlal's year of service !*

—*Young India* : January 9, 1930.

21. LAHORE CONGRESS IMPRESSIONS

I propose, though late, to jot down a few impressions of the Congress. † I have a vivid impression of an old half-clad man from Basti district in the U.P. who had come to see Gandhiji in his tent. It was on the Independence Day, i.e., the 1st of January. Gandhiji was out, and without any ceremony he sat down to warm himself at the fire place. 'So there is *Swaraj* now,' he said beaming with joy. 'Has Nehru's son ascended the *gadi* at Delhi and has the *bada lat* (The Viceroy) really gone? That was to him the visible manifestation of *Swaraj*. The dear man did not know that Pandit Jawaharlal does not believe in ascending a throne, for the simple reason that he does not believe in kings or princes, but he does want a *Swaraj* which can be genuinely shared with him by the peasant from Basti.

But all sorts of views were, as usual, to be found in Gandhi's camp. And if at one end there was the half-clad peasant from Basti, at the other end there was an English graduate from Cambridge, who had been with us for some time, specially come to India to see things for himself. 'You will have a better appetite today, I daresay,' he asked a friend in the camp. The friend did not see the point of the joke, and so the friend from Cambridge finished it for him. 'Well, you have passed the Independence Resolution, and well might you rejoice and have a feast. But poor me! How can I enjoy my meal when I know that the Resolution means a big slice off our Empire?'

*"We have a helmsman like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and I do not think we are ever going to have a better young man as our President. Would that we achieved our goal whilst he has the reins of our affairs in his hands!"

—*Young India* : January 16, 1930.

†Lahore Congress where resolution on Complete Independence was passed.

I do not know what thoughts stirred Jawaharlal's breast on the day the Resolution was passed. He was immersed in work from morning until midnight, and it was impossible for one to steal a quiet chat with him. But he would be a fool who would judge of his feelings from the joyful way in which he participated in the early morning celebrations held by the volunteers and delegates soon after the Resolution was passed. Perhaps, some of them were intoxicated with delight and believed, too, that the President who danced and sang with them shared the same exuberance of emotion. But I, who have known him on other occasions and have spent days and nights with him within prison walls, think otherwise. He is too sane a man to mistake a resolution for the achievement. The words in his address that will ever ring true were :

'We may not be strong enough to assert our will. We are very conscious of our weakness and there is no boasting in us of pride of strength. But let no one, least of all England, mistake or underrate the meaning or strength of our resolve. Solemnly with full knowledge of consequences, I hope, we shall take it, and there will be no turning back.'

The fact, however, is that Pandit Jawaharlal is so full of the joy of life that it manifests itself on all occasions. It was he who kept our jail enclosure lively during our days in Lucknow in 1922. He could not brook anyone going about with a demure face or sad and moping. He could not brook a slouching gait. 'Walk in a straight and manly way,' he would say to one. 'There is no spring in your muscle', he would say to another and show him how to walk like a disciplined soldier in the army. It is this *joie de vivre* that invests him with a buoyancy and self-confidence which he can bring to bear on any task to which he is called. 'If the thing is thrust upon me, I will not wince', he had said to Gandhiji when the latter pressed him to accept the Presidentship, and in spite of the most difficult time that he had to face, he did not only not seem to wince, but faced his task with a confidence and authority to be found only in men who have had long experience of the job. (M.D.)

—*Young India* : January 30, 1930.

22. ON THE EVE OF THE DANDI MARCH

Let nobody assume that after I am arrested, there will be no one left to guide you. It is not I but Pandit Jawaharlal who is your guide. He has the capacity to lead. Though the fact is that those who have learnt the lesson of fearlessness and self-effacement need no leader, but if we lack these virtues, not even Jawaharlal will be able to produce them in us.

—*Young India* : March 20, 1930.

23. MOTILALJI'S MUNIFICENCE

The palatial *Anand Bhavan*, the pride of the Nehrus, is to be national property from 6th instant, the National Satyagraha Day. Motilalji has much service to his credit. Jawaharlal is his living gift to the nation. There was no need to add brick and mortar. But I know he has been pining to part with that spacious house, which has the historical associations now made known to the public. Truly, Motilalji has spent as he has earned. Let us prove worthy of his services and his gifts.

—*Young India* : April 3, 1930.

24. CHIEF SERVANT OF THE NATION

Ras.

March 19, 1930.

My dear Jawaharlal,

You are in for a whole night vigil but it is inevitable, if you are to return before tomorrow night. The messenger will bring you where I may be. You are reaching me at the most trying stage in the march.* You will have to cross a channel at about two a.m. on the shoulders of tried fishermen. I dare

*The famous Dandi March.

not interrupt the march, even for the chief servant of the nation.

Love,
BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 355.

25. WORKED LIKE A TROJAN

Dandi,
April 4, 1930.

Dear Motilalji,

So Jawahar is to have six months' rest. He has worked like a Trojan. He needed this rest. If things continue to move with the present velocity, he won't have even six months' rest. The Jambusar you saw the other day is different today. Whole villages have turned out. I never expected this phenomenal response. In many villages, Government servants can get no service. The removal of some of our picked men has only stiffened the resistance of the people. But enough of this optimism. He will be a wise man who can say what will happen tomorrow. Accounts arriving from Bombay, too, are most encouraging. I take it you are following the pages of *Young India*.

How are you keeping?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

—*Mahatma* : Vol. III, p. 40.

26. PRESIDENT'S REWARD

The President of the Congress has had his laurels cheap. For, a telegram just received from Pandit Motilalji tells me that Pandit Jawaharlal has been sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment. But even a day's imprisonment of the nation's first servant is an affront offered to the whole nation. Through this imprisonment, the Government have told us to do our worst. And the worst we can do is to invite more suffering upon ourselves. This can only be done by our intensifying

the campaign. Great as is the work being done by the youth of the country, I must confess that I am not satisfied with the response from the students. They have not yet got self-confidence. They do not believe that *Swaraj* is coming soon. They do not realize that it is for them to anticipate its advent by simple faith and acting upon it. But faith cannot be given by anybody. It has to come from within. The country will watch the effect of Pandit Jawaharlal's incarceration upon the thousands of students, who are still hankering after degrees and diplomas.

—*Young India* : April 17, 1930.

27. JAWAHARLAL ON PROBLEM OF MINORITIES

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru sent the following note to Mahadev Desai on March 16. Mahadev Desai being too busy was unable to attend to it. It has now been forwarded to me, and I have no hesitation in presenting to the public the President's views on the vexed question of minorities. It derives added significance from the fact of his incarceration.

"The curtain has gone up again on the Indian stage and all the world is witness to our struggle for freedom. It is a strange struggle and our methods are novel. But it is also a grim struggle and the pledge that India took on Independence Day, January 26, will not be forgotten. The spark that was lit by our leader on the banks of the Sabarmati is already spreading like a prairie fire throughout the country, and soon the whole land will try to redeem that pledge. Many a tragic scene will be enacted and many an actor on this vast stage will suffer torment before the curtain rings down finally on a Free India.

"But even when the fight is fiercest and consumes all our energies, we must remember that the true solution of our difficulties can come only when we have won over and given satisfaction to our minorities. Today, it is unfortunately the fact that some of them fear the majority, and for fear of it keep apart from the struggle for freedom. It is sad that some, who were our comrades-in-arms ten years ago, are not with us today. None of us, who had the

privilege of marching shoulder to shoulder with them then, can forget the brave part they took and the sacrifices they made. We cherish that memory and we are assured that when the fight thickens, they must take their rightful place in the forefront.

"The history of India and of many of the countries of Europe has demonstrated that there can be no stable equilibrium in any country so long as an attempt is made to crush a minority, or to force it to conform to the ways of the majority. There is no surer method of rousing the resentment of the minority and keeping it apart from the rest of the nation than to make it feel that it has not got the freedom to stick to its own ways. Repression and coercion can never succeed in coercing a minority. They but make it more self-conscious and more determined to value and hold fast to what it considers its very own. It matters little whether logic is on its side or whether its own particular brand of culture is worthwhile or not. The mere fear of losing it makes it dear. Freedom to keep it would itself lessen its value. The new Russia has gone a long way in solving its minorities' problem by giving each one of them the fullest cultural, educational and linguistic freedom.

"Therefore, we in India must make it clear to all that our policy is based on granting this freedom to the minorities, and that under no circumstances will any coercion or repression of them be tolerated. There is hardly any likelihood of economic questions affecting the minorities as such ; but should they do so, we can also lay down as our deliberate policy that there shall be no unfair treatment of any minority. Indeed, we should go further and state that it will be the business of the State to give favoured treatment to minority and backward communities.

"In a Free India, political representation can only be on national lines. I would like this representation to be on economic basis, which would fit in with modern conditions far more than territorial representation, and would also automatically do away with the lines of demarcation along communal lines. With religious and cultural and

linguistic freedom granted, the principal questions that will arise in our legislatures will be economic ones, and divisions on them cannot be on communal lines. But whatever the method of representation adopted may be, it must be such as to carry the goodwill of the minorities.

"If these principles are accepted and adhered to, I do not think any minority can have a grievance or feel that it is ignored. It is possible, however, that, while agreeing to these principles, the minority may doubt the *bona fides* of the majority in giving effect to them. To that, the only effective answer can be the translation of these principles into action. Unfortunately, the ability to translate them into action can only come with the conquest of power in the State. If the *bona fides* of the majority are doubted, as they might well be, then even pacts and agreements are of little value. A general and country-wide adoption of certain broad principles can create a public opinion strong enough to prevent even an aggressive and evil-intentioned majority from going astray. But temporary pacts between individuals, or even representatives, cannot have the same value.

"These principles should apply to all minority groups. To the Muslims, who really are in such large numbers in India that it is inconceivable that any majority can coerce them; to the Sikhs who, although small in number, are a powerful and well-knit group; to the Parsis; to the Anglo-Indians or 'Eurasians' who are gradually drifting to nationalism; and to all other minorities.

"What is the present position of the Congress on this vital question? The Nehru Report has lapsed, but surely the non-controversial parts of the Report remain. The Fundamental Rights, as stated there, included religious, cultural, linguistic and educational freedom. This declaration must remain, and it removes at once the major fears of a minority. So far as other matters are concerned, minorities as such will hardly be affected, and the Lahore Congress has declared that in an Independent India such questions should be solved on strictly national lines. It has gone further. It has assured the Muslims,

the Sikhs and other minorities that if any solution of any communal problem is proposed in future, it will not be accepted by the Congress unless it gives full satisfaction to the parties concerned. A more complete guarantee could not have been given ; and if the Congress remains true to its word, no minority need have the least fear.

"Thus, the Congress has endeavoured to give effect to the principles that should govern the treatment of minorities. If in the eyes of some it is still suspect, it is not because of what it has done but because of want of trust and unjustified fear. The Congress, I trust, will remain true to these principles and will demonstrate to the country that in communal matters it will not deviate to the right or the left, and will hold the centre impartially. It will, I hope, prove to the minority communities that in Independent India, for which we strive, theirs will be an honoured and a favoured place. And by its sacrifices and its determined courage in the fight for freedom, it will convince all of its *bona fides*.

16-3-'30

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU"

—*Young India* : May 15, 1930.

28. PLEA FOR ECONOMY IN NATIONAL EXPENDITURE

I do not think anyone can beat me in my passion for guarding and expending public money like a miser. The reason is obvious. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. I am hoping that the Provisional Settlement* may lead on to permanent peace, and I shall leave no stone unturned to achieve it. But man is often powerless before Nature. I, at any rate, cannot strive with Nature, and Nature seems, for the time being, to be against us. And if God wills that there should be no peace, you may be sure that the next struggle will be fiercer than the last, and will engulf us all. And it may have to be

*Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

fought without any resources. Let us, therefore, think twice before we expend a pie, and curtail our expenditure in all directions. I have often wondered where we get all our cars from and whether we need them really. I know I often use a motor-car, but let no one follow my bad example.

Let us be worthy of *Swaraj* when it comes. Let us remember that we have 20 points now instead of 11, which contain the quintessence of *Swaraj*; and let me tell you that it was not I who fixed the maximum salary of the *Swaraj* Viceroy at Rs. 500/- but Pandit Jawaharlal. He has given his thought to the problem and he has deliberately fixed that amount. And if that is to be the salary of the Viceroy, what is to be the remuneration of an ordinary worker? Let us keep that ideal in mind and cut our coat according to our cloth. The Government of today collects taxes by force and recovers revenue at the point of the bayonet. In *Swaraj*, we shall not be able to do so, we will have numerous Gadwalis to refuse to use arms against their brethren. Let us, therefore, order our affairs in the terms of the poor of the land. Let us not go to sleep, now that there is a Provisional Settlement. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public.

—*Young India* : April 16, 1931.

29. PLACATING JAWAHARLAL?

A Bengali correspondent has written a long letter which I condense as follows :

“Much has been said about Bhagatsing and his comrades, yet even now I find great difficulty in appreciating the wisdom of passing the resolution at the Karachi Congress.

“I am afraid it will not be possible for me to explain to you properly the different, peculiar and surreptitious ways in which your remarks about Bhagatsing and the Karachi Resolution extolling him are being exploited here by some interested politicians to serve their own purpose and undermine your influence.

"They accuse you for the niggardly way in which the Resolution had been worded by you. These people are trying to impress upon the minds of the young men that you really had no sincere sympathy for those unfortunate men, and that you gave your support to the Resolution and expressed your admiration for Bhagatsing and his comrades only being prevailed upon by the *Navajuvanwallas*, whose strong agitation you could not resist, and you wanted to placate Pandit Jawaharlal."

I have already expressed my doubts as to the propriety of my having drafted and sponsored the Bhagatsing Resolution, not because it was wrong in principle, but for the misinterpretation it has lent itself to. But the reader must know that it was neither the fear of the *Navajuvans*, nor my love for Pandit Jawaharlal that prompted me to initiate the Resolution. I should be ashamed of yielding to *Navajuvans* or placating Jawaharlal. I should be foolish if I did not yield to *Navajuvans*, if yielding advanced the interest of the country and involved no sacrifice of principle. And I should go a very long way to please Jawaharlal and retain his affection which I have the privilege of possessing in abundance. But there was no prompting required in this case. I had interested myself in the movement for the commutation of the death sentence on Bhagatsing and his comrades. I had put my whole being into the task. I had, therefore, to study the life of the principle actor in the tragedy. I had to come in contact with his devoted father and those who were attached to Bhagatsing not for his deed but for his character. I was thus drawn to the Resolution in the natural course. I am too sensitive not to be moved by circumstances demanding sympathy.

—*Young India* : June 11, 1931.

30. A COUNTRYMAN'S ADVICE

Many American friends write to me on the American visit which reporters had planned for me. Those Americans, who are in close touch with me, have earnestly dissuaded me from it. Others, also friendly, have with equal earnestness

asked me to go. Now comes an extremely well reasoned appeal from a countryman residing in America. It deals with three matters of importance. But I must let the letter speak for itself of which the relevant portion is given below :

"I have also a word to add regarding this much-talked-of question of your attire when visiting England or America.

"It will be simply abhorable and hurt your prestige immensely, if you were to don European clothes.

"Once again I do not want to be misunderstood, because I do believe in doing in Rome as the Romans do, and, very recently, have I discarded my turban and shaved off my beard, but I am just an ordinary Indian. You are Mahatma Gandhi and therein lies the difference, which is as great as between earth and heaven.

"It will be simply ironical if you could not find some form of Indian dress which may be quite suitable and desirable. I am, of course, not suggesting your visiting the West in the loin cloth, because that would be neither practical from the climatical point of view nor quite desirable, but, sure enough, there are other forms of Indian costumes which could be worn by you to advantage. I would suggest the Nehru family dress, not with *Dhoti* but with *Churidar pajama* and a close collared coat.

"Already the papers in America have been making fun about your wearing Western clothes when visiting London, and I enclose herewith a cutting on the subject.

"In the end, I hope that you will not consider me very impertinent for having taken the liberty of addressing a letter like this to you and making all these suggestions. But they come from a sincere heart and from someone who has always been a great admirer of you."

None of the three things* worry me. The proposal to visit America has been with me for the past five years or longer. But I have lacked the inner urge or courage to go.

*The reference to other two, being irrelevant, has been omitted.

The very allurements, some of the writers have held out, have but confirmed the original decision based on nothing better than intuition. The same is true of the English visit more or less. There, too, if I am to go, the way will be clear and open for me. At the present moment, the subtle and growing resistance to the Delhi Pact* by the officials leaves me no room for thinking of anything else. My contribution to the movement of India's freedom just now consists in making every effort humanly possible to prevent the Settlement from being wrecked.

As to the dress, I have had many advisers. But here, too, my position is simple. If I go to England, I shall go as a representative and nothing more, nothing less. I must, therefore, appear not as the English would have me, but as my representative character demands. I represent the Congress because and in so far as it represents *Daridranarayana*, the semi-starved, almost naked, villager. And if I represent the landed or monied or educated Indians, I do so to the extent that they identify themselves with *Daridranarayana* and desire to promote his interest. I can, therefore, appear neither in English costume, nor in that of the polished Nehrus. In spite of the closest bond between us, it would have been just as ludicrous for me to dress as Pandit Motilalji did, as it would have been for him to appear in loin cloth. My loin cloth is an organic evolution in my life. It came naturally, without effort, without premeditation. My duty, as I conceive it, will then be, if I succeed in reaching London, to add nothing more to the loin cloth than the climate peremptorily demands. I should be guilty of discourtesy to the English if I deceive them by appearing not as I am, but as I may think or friends may think they would have me to be. I should fail at the very beginning of my mission, if I commenced by deception. It may please for the time being, it must offend in the end. If I am to win their hearts, as I want to, I can do so only by being cent per cent truthful. Truth is like the Sun. It will melt the icy mountain of suspicion and distrust.

—*Young India* : July 9, 1931.

*Popularly known as Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

31. NO CLASH OF PRINCIPLE

When an Associated Press correspondent comes and pesters Gandhiji with questions : 'Have you come to Simla for such and such a thing?' 'Are the officials implementing the Truce?', and so on, he simply turns and says : "Go to the Secretariat." "I do so solely in the interests of peace, solely in the interests of Government," said he. "But look at the propaganda against the Congress. The English papers insinuate that the Sardar and Pandit Jawaharlal have been disloyal to me, and that they have been pulled up more than once by me. But I say that no two men have more scrupulously carried out my suggestions without demur. Pandit Jawaharlal has carried out to the letter some of the suggestions that perhaps did not appeal to him. He is coming here, as you know. But do you think I would have to prime him as to what he should say and should not say? He would resent it, he would think I was interfering with his liberty. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's allegiance to me has become a common joke. Jawaharlal would claim independence and assert it. Vallabhbhai would not claim it, he believes in effacing himself. Not that he has no views of his own, but he believes that when there is complete agreement on the essentials, it is no use questioning the details. I may tell you that there never has been a clash of principle between me and either of the two. If there had been one, we should have separated long ago. And yet false statements appear in the English Press.

"For one thing, if I had many advisers I should get confused. For another, I do not want to go to haggle there.* I am to be sent there to represent humble folk, and I should place their demand in as simple and straight a manner as possible. That is why we do not want many experts either. For, I know that if it was a trial of strength in experts between India and England, we should easily be floored. So far as I am concerned, God is my only adviser, and my plain mother wit would come to my aid. As for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai, there is no doubt that they would be

*At the Round Table Conference, London.

needed here. We do not want an argumentative demonstration there. It is merely a matter of the Britishers feeling what they should yield, and our feeling what we are strong enough to demand and receive. But even for that, Jawaharlal's and Vallabhbhai's place is here. They would be strengthening me much more by remaining here than by accompanying me there." (M.D.)

—*Young India* : July 23, 1931.

32. GOD IS GREAT

God is great, and we are but dust. But, thanks to our pride, whilst we say with our lips 'God is great', our actions belie the profession and show that we think nothing of God and a 'mighty lot' of ourselves. But it is time to realize our helplessness. The growing *goondism* . . . must furnish all with food for reflection. It cannot, it must not be answered with counter *goondism* than which nothing is easier. What can be easier than to swear harder than one's opponent, or to give two blows against one, or to organize ten men against five? But this can serve no earthly purpose. And if it can serve any celestial purpose, that abode must be worse than the fabled hell.

Is there, then, no remedy for the growing evil? The time-honoured and well-tried method is that of prayer and fasting. But both have to come from the heart. A parrot-like repetition of the choicest sentiment and mere starvation of the body would be worse than useless. Prayer and fasting avail where there is a definite consciousness of the presence of God in us, even as we have of friends living under the same roof. Self-deception will not do.

Jawaharlal uttered the feeling of co-workers, when in anguish he said : 'This will stop political life and may even influence social life.' The way out is not to give any handle to *goondism*. The best way would be for peaceful men to withdraw from meetings when the *goondas* have invaded it. Truth will not be suppressed by violence. And if those who represent it will suffer without retaliation, they will find that it will spread without effort. Difficulty, however, lies in knowing where truth lies. It is easy enough to accuse one's

opponent of representing untruth. But this inherent inability to demonstrate the absolute truthfulness of one's position, makes toleration an imperative necessity for the progress of ordered life. Without the freedom to everyone to express his opinion, unfettered by interference from those who hold the contrary, ordered life becomes an impossibility.

—*Young India* : August 13, 1931.

33. 'CAN'T WE COPE WITH IT?'

When Sardar Vallabhbhai and Pandit Jawaharlal saw Gandhiji in the afternoon of the 8th and asked him whether he would be available for the evening sitting, as he was expected to make a statement on the question of his going to London, Gandhiji was reading an inflammatory leaflet issued by some of the rowdy agencies in Bombay. It was so full of grossly false statements and deliberate incitement to violence, that it made even Gandhiji's blood boil. In deep sorrow, he said : "I do not feel like going anywhere. How I wish I could shut myself up here and cry out my grief. There is so much violence in the air, so much falsehood, that I often wonder if it is worthwhile my going, even if other circumstances made it possible."

"But," said Pandit Jawaharlal, "if a communal riot, which, we are told, is being engineered, were to break out, how is your presence needed here? Can't we cope with it?"

Gandhiji smiled a faint smile. It was close upon three, and the Sardar and Panditji left for the meeting. I am giving these details here in order that what appeared to be a sudden breakdown on that momentous evening, may be presented in its true setting. If he could have avoided making that statement, when he was summoned to do so by the Sardar, he would gladly have avoided it. It was a moment when he felt it

"Half a sin

*To express in words the grief I feel,
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the soul within."*

(M.D.)

—*Young India* : August 13, 1931.

34. ALONE, YET NOT ALONE

Reynolds as well as other friends have wanted me to take Jawaharlal with me to London at least. He is fearless, yet gentle ; being a stranger to weakness and weakening diffidence, detects weakness in a flash ; having no diplomacy about him, hates diplomatic language and insists upon going straight to the point. And as I consider myself to be in advance of him in idealism, he returns the compliment by dismissing my claim. I honour him, and, therefore, share the wish energetically expressed by so many friends, that Jawaharlal should be with me to keep me on the straight path and to serve as my dictionary of reference in case of doubt.

Other friends have wanted others to be by my side, even though they may not be delegates. They are so thankful, that Malaviyaji * and Sarojini Devi will be with me as persons entitled to nomination by reason of their distinguished status, apart from their being members of the Congress and their being past presidents. There is weight in every one of the suggestions made by these friends. All the considerations were with the Working Committee when, after a full and prolonged debate, it came to the conclusion that there should be sole delegation on behalf of the Congress. I fully share the unanimous view expressed by the members of the Working Committee. But just before the way became clear for me to go to London, and more, when the way was opened at 7 p.m. on the 27th, my weakness burst upon me as never before, and I have not got over it even as I dictate these lines on the train taking me to Bombay.

Something within me told me, that I must not bear the burden of the Simla visit single-handed, but that as the Frontier Province and the United Provinces were storm centres and as Gujarat was the special care of Sardar Vallabhbhai, he, Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be by my side, and that I should take no decision without their full consent and approval,

*Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

and so in my telegram to the Viceroy, I told him that these three would accompany me to Simla. As I had to pass through Delhi, I telegraphed to Dr. Ansari also, so that I could have half an hour with him. He was not in Delhi but in Mussoorie attending to a patient. My wire was repeated to him there, and he went down post haste to Kalka to meet me since he could not catch me at Delhi, and so he, too, came along to Simla. And I can thankfully confess, that the presence of each one of them was most valuable to me, and I can give out the secret, that but for their presence and especially of Jawaharlal's frank and insistent criticism, the Second Settlement, though identical in substance, would have taken a form very different from that in which it finally emerged ; and I must own, that the form in which it finally emerged is far superior to the one to which I alone, in my trustfulness even in official nature, would have subscribed. With that very useful experience in front of me, the reader would be entitled to say, that I must either be too conceited or too dull to see that I must take these very colleagues with me to London, even though they may not be with me as co-delegates.

But I am not aware of any conceit in me, nor of special dullness that would conceal the reality from me. These colleagues, too, still feel that sole delegation is the proper thing, and that their own place is not in London, either as delegates or the counsellors, but at their respective posts of duty in India. Their presence in India would be a much greater help than what is to be gained by their being available for discussion in London.

I must go to London feeling my weakness in its fulness. I must go to London with God as my only Guide. He is a jealous Lord. He will allow no one to share His authority. One has, therefore, to appear before Him in all one's weakness, empty-handed and in a spirit of full surrender, and then He enables you to stand before a whole world and protects you from all harm. When I think of the prospects in London, when I know that all is not well in India, that the Second Settlement is bereft of all grace and is charged with no pleasant memories, there is nothing wanting to fill me with utter despair. The horizon is as black as it possibly could

be. There is every chance of my returning empty-handed. That is just the state which realization of weakness finds one in. But believing as I do, that God has made the way to London clear for me through the Second Settlement, I approach the visit with hope, and feel that any result that comes out of it would be good for the nation, if I do not prove faithless to the mandate given to me by the Congress.

—*Young India* : September 3, 1931.

35. AT JAWAHARLAL'S COLLEGE

When we were going to Eton, one of the first questions that Gandhiji had asked was whether Eton was not the school where Jawaharlal was educated. 'It was at Harrow', I said. 'and not Eton', and I am not exaggerating, if I say, that part of Gandhiji's interest in the Eton visit was lost because of that knowledge. The reader will now understand why Gandhiji was looking forward to a visit to Cambridge. It is the Cambridge of Jawaharlal and Charlie Andrews; and when the latter took him out for his morning walk, Gandhiji insisted on being taken through the vast quadrangle of Trinity College where Jawaharlal was educated. Call it sentiment, call it what you will, it is imbedded in human nature and Gandhiji is subject to it as much as any one of us. Trinity was the College, not only of Jawaharlal, but of Tennyson and Bacon and Newton, but perhaps, we should not have looked into it, did we not know it was Jawaharlal's College, just as, for instance, we did not look into Christ Church, though we knew it was Wordsworth's. (M.D.)

—*Young India* : November 19, 1931.

36. THE DEATH DANCE

*Yeravda Central Prison,
Poona.*

February 15, 1933.

My dear Jawaharlal,

In the hope of giving you a good letter against your splendid letter, I have been postponing writing to you. But

I can do so no longer. Daily the work is increasing. I must, therefore, write now and do the best I can. I wonder if you are allowed an innocent paper like *Harijan*. I am sending it in the hope that you will get it. If you do, you will please let me have your opinion.

The fight against Sanatanists is becoming more and more interesting, if also increasingly difficult. The one good thing is that they have been awakened from long lethargy. The abuses they are hurling at me are wonderfully refreshing. I am all that is bad and corrupt on this earth. But the storm will subside. For, I apply the sovereign remedy of *Ahimsa*, non-retaliation. The more I ignore the abuses, the fiercer they are becoming. But it is the death dance of the moth round a lamp. Poor Rajagopalachari and Devdas! They are also in for it. They are dragging out the engagement with Lakshmi and weaving round it foul charges. Thus is untouchability being supported.

Sarup and Krishna* saw me the other day about untouchability, and Indu as part of the domestic interview. Indu was in excellent health and seemed to be quite happy. Sarup is having a brief tour in Kathiawad and Gujarat for Anti-Untouchability Bills. Our time is being wholly occupied by the untouchability work. Sardar Vallabhbhai contributes all the envelopes for the ever increasing number of outgoing letters. He is the diligent newspaper reader who digs out odd bits of information on untouchability and what not. He is also a factory for the inexhaustible supply of mirth. The inspection day is just the same to him as any other day. He never has any request to make. With me, never a day passes but I have some request to make. But I do not know which is the happier. Why may I not be as happy as he, if I can take my defeats without pulling a long face!

We all envy your solitude and your studies. It is true that our burdens are of our own making or, more accurately, of my making. I have dashed to pieces all Vallabhbhai's hope of becoming a good Sanskrit scholar. He can't concentrate on his studies in the midst of the excitement of *Harijan* work and the daily dish of spiced criticism, which

*Sisters of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, now known as Smt. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Smt. Krishna Hutheesing respectively.

he enjoys like the Bengal footballers their game. Mahadev continues to be what Shaukat described him to be—the *hamal* of the party. No work is too much for him or beyond him. Chhaganlal Joshi is still finding his feet. But he is flourishing. With the spring now well on us, he cannot fail to blossom out. We are not a bad assortment. We observe the rules of the game and so make a fairly decent family, strictly regulated by the code of *Varnashrama* which, between Dr. Ambedkar and me, will soon provide a new sensation for the Sanatanists. More trouble for me but none of my seeking, I assure you. I have now only space and time enough to say we all hope your progress all round continues steadily.

Love from us all,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 356.

37. TOO BIG FOR INTELLECTUAL EFFORT

*Yeravda Central Prison,
Poona.*

May 2, 1933.

My dear Jawaharlal,

As I was struggling against the coming fast, you were before me as it were in flesh and blood. But it was no use. How I wish I could feel that you had understood the absolute necessity of it. The Harijan movement is too big for mere intellectual effort. There is nothing so bad in all the world. And yet I cannot leave religion and, therefore, Hinduism. My life would be a burden to me, if Hinduism failed me. I love Christianity, Islam, and many other faiths through Hinduism. Take it away and nothing remains for me. But, then, I cannot tolerate it with untouchability—the high-and-low belief. Fortunately, Hinduism contains a sovereign remedy for the evil. I have applied the remedy. I want you to feel, if you can, that it is well if I survive the fast and well also if the body dissolves in spite of the effort to live. What is it after all—more perishable than a brittle chimney piece. You can preserve the latter intact for ten thousand years, but you may

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fail to keep the body intact even for a minute. And, surely, death is not an end to all effort. Rightly faced, it may be but the beginning of a nobler effort. But I won't convince you by argument, if you did not see the truth intuitively. I know that even if I do not carry your approval with me, I shall retain your precious love during all those days of ordeal.

I had your letter which I had thought I would answer at leisure. Well, God had willed otherwise! I had talks with Krishna. Of Sarup's work in Kathiawad, I think I wrote to you. Kamala has not even sent me her address. There has been no letter from her for many days now. When you see her, please give her and Indu my love. Kamala must not worry over the fast. If possible, send me a wire.

Love from us all,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 356.

38. 'MY LOVE AND THOUGHTS ARE WITH YOU'

Pandit Jawaharlal's message moved Gandhiji to tears. In words in which you feel the sparks of the live wire, he thus pours out his devotion :

"Your letter. What can I say about matters I do not understand? I feel lost in a strange country where you are the only familiar landmark, and I try to grope my way in the dark. But I stumble. Whatever happens, my love and thoughts are with you." (*M.D.*)

—*Harijan* : May 13, 1933.

Pandit Jawaharlal had already sent Gandhiji two telegrams from prison. On the 5th May 1933, he sent a letter in which he said :

"It is hard to be so far from you, and yet it would be harder to be near you. This crowded world is a very lonely place, and you want to make it still lonelier. Life and death matter little, or should matter little. The only thing that matters is the cause that one works for, and if one could be sure that the best service to it is to die for it, then death would seem simpler. I have loved life, the

mountains and the sea, the sun and rain and storm and snow, and animals, and books and art, and even human beings—and life has been good to me. But the idea of death has never frightened me ; from a distance, it seems fitting enough as the crown of one's endeavour. Yet, at close quarters, it is not pleasant to contemplate.

“The last 14 or 15 years have been a wonderful time for me, ever since I had the good fortune to be associated with you in various activities. Life became fuller and richer and more worthwhile, and that is a dear and precious memory which nothing can take from me. And whenever the future happens to be dark, this vision of the past will relieve the gloom and give strength.”

—*Incidents of Gandhiji's Life* : p. 310.

39. JAWAHARLAL-GANDHI CORRESPONDENCE

Poona.

September 15, 1933.

Pandit Jawaharlal at the outset repeated that they stood for Complete Independence and as there was confusion arising out of a vague phraseology and misleading propaganda, he thought it would be well to remove that by reiteration of their political demand. Obviously, the word ‘independence’ must include full control of the army, foreign relations and economic control as had been clearly laid down by the Congress.

As regards economic matters, the Karachi Congress in passing the resolution on fundamental rights and economic changes had given the lead and pointed out the direction in which they should move.

“I attach great importance to that resolution, but, personally, I would like to go further and clarify the position still more. It seems to me that if we are to improve the condition of the masses, to raise them economically and give them freedom, it is inevitable that vested interests in India will have to give up their special position and many of their privileges. It is inconceivable to me how else the masses can rise. Therefore, the problem of achieving freedom becomes one of revising the vested interests

in favour of the masses. To the extent this is done, to that extent only will freedom come. The biggest vested interest in India is the British Government, next come the Indian Princes and others follow. We do not wish to injure any class or group, and divesting should be done as gently as possible and with every effort to avoid injury. But it is obvious that divesting is bound to cause loss to the classes or groups which enjoy special privileges at the expense of the masses.

"It is also obvious that the process of divesting must be as speedy as possible to bring relief to the masses. Indeed, the economic forces themselves are acting with amazing rapidity today and are breaking up the old order. The big *Zamindari* and *Talukdari* system in the United Provinces has largely collapsed, though it may be kept up for some time longer by outside agencies. Even the condition of the *Zamindars* is very bad and the peasantry, of course, are in a far worse position."

Proceeding, Pandit Jawaharlal said that they were all agreed that the R.T.C. and its various productions were utterly useless to solve even one of India's many problems, and it seemed to him that the R.T.C. was an effort to consolidate the vested interests in India behind the British Government so as to face the rising powerful national and economic movements in the country; and because a mere preservation of those vested interests could not solve India's economic ills, the effort was foredoomed to inevitable failure.

Turning to another aspect, the Pandit stated that the problem of India's freedom could not be separated from the vital, international problems of the world. The then prevailing crisis in the world affairs was having repercussions in India. At any moment, that might result in a complete breakdown or in a violent international conflagration; everywhere there was a conflict and contest between the forces of reaction and vested interests. India could not remain a silent witness of those titanic forces, and he felt that they must range themselves with the progressive forces of the world. But that ranging then could be ideologically only.

Regarding individual and mass civil disobedience, he felt

there was no fundamental difference as civil disobedience was essentially an individual affair. He agreed with Mahatma Gandhi that their movement was essentially an open one and secret methods did not fit in with it. But agreeing with it, some of them felt that, to some extent, as for instance, in corresponding with each other, a measure of secrecy might be necessary, but secrecy was hardly the word for it and privacy suited better. Though he agreed with Mahatma Gandhi in discouraging secret methods, he felt that certain latitude might be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Gandhiji in his reply to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said he was in complete agreement with much of what he (Pandit Jawaharlal) had stated in his letter.

Gandhiji stated:

"The experience gained after the Karachi Congress has, if possible, strengthened my faith in the main resolution and the economic programme referred to by you. I have no doubt in my mind that our goal can be no less than Complete Independence. I am also in whole-hearted agreement with you when you say that without a material revision of the vested interests, the condition of the masses can never be improved. I believe, too, though I may not go as far as you do, that before India can become one homogenous entity, the Princes will have to part with much of their power and become popular representatives of the people over whom they are ruling today. I can corroborate from first-hand experience much of what you say about the Round Table Conference.

"Nor have I the slightest difficulty in agreeing with you in these days of rapid intercommunication and growing consciousness of the oneness of all mankind. We must recognize that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going on in other parts of the world. I can, therefore, go the whole length with you and say that we should range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world. But I know that though there is such an agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us.

"Thus, you have emphasized the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them, the attainment of the goal is assured. I feel, too, our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means. If we can give an ocular demonstration of our uttermost truthfulness and non-violence, I am convinced our statement of the national goal cannot long offend the interests which your letter would appear to attack. We do not seek to coerce anyone. We seek to convert them. This method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced it is the shortest."

Regarding individual and mass civil disobedience, Gandhiji explained it was not right to think there was no fundamental difference between them. The chief distinction was that in the individual civil disobedience everyone was an independent unit and his fall did not affect others; while in the mass civil disobedience, the fall of one generally affected others adversely. Leadership was essential in mass civil disobedience, while every resister was his own leader in individual civil disobedience.

About secret methods, Mahatma Gandhi reiterated he was as firm as ever that those should be tabooed. That had caused much mischief and, if it was not put down, it might cause further ruin. There might be exceptional circumstances that might warrant them, but he would forego that advantage for the sake of the masses whom they wanted to educate in fearlessness. He would not confuse their minds by leading them to think that under certain circumstances they might resort to secret methods.

Gandhiji concluded :

"I notice one gap in your letter. You make no mention of the various constructive activities of the Congress. They became an integral part of the Congress programme that was framed after mature deliberations in 1920. With

civil resistance as a background, we cannot possibly do without constructive activities, such as communal unity, removal of untouchability and universalization of the spinning wheel and *Khaddar*. I am as strong as ever about these. We must recognize that whilst Congressmen can be counted by hundreds of thousands, the civil resisters imprisoned have never amounted to more than one lakh. I feel there is something radically wrong if paralysis has overtaken the remaining lakhs. There is nothing to be ashamed of in an open confession by those who, for any reason whatsoever, are not able to join the civil resisters' ranks. They are also serving the cause of the country and bringing it nearer the goal who are engaged in any of the constructive activities I have named, and several other kindred activities I can add to the list. Ordinance or no ordinance, if individual Congressman and Congresswoman will learn the art of contributing their share to the work of building up the House of Independence and realize their own importance, dark as the horizon seems to us, there is absolutely no cause for despair or disappointment.

"Finally, I would like to say that I have no sense of defeat in me and the hope, that this country of ours is fast marching towards its goal, is burning as bright as it did in 1920."

—*The Leader* : September 17, 1933.

40. NO FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

Asked whether there was no fundamental difference of opinion between him and Mahatma Gandhi regarding the objective, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said :

"My correspondence with Gandhiji has made it clear that he generally agrees with the objective to bring about equalization in the social order by divesting vested interests. It is true, as pointed out by Gandhiji, that our outlook is temperamentally not alike, but fundamentally we aim at the same thing. Gandhiji is far more interested in methods and believes that, if right methods are pursued inevitably

right results would follow. Personally, I feel it is also necessary to have the full objective always in view.

"Personally, I would like to develop the economic programme in greater detail, so that people may have a clearer vision. Our struggle is fundamentally a national struggle because all countries under foreign domination are bound to be nationalistic before anything else. An economic programme helps in clearing the issues and allowing everyone to realize exactly where he and his class and group stand."

—*The Leader* : September 20, 1933.

41. SOCIALISM AND JAWAHARLAL

On a reference made by the editor of *The Madras Mail* on December 21, 1933, to the policy of the Congress and some recent utterances of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on Socialism, Gandhiji said :

"My mind is in Yeravda. I am out only for Harijan work. I have not got the reins of Congress Government in my hands. They are in the hands of Jawaharlal. I have the fullest confidence in him. He is too sane a man to depart from the fundamental Congress policy without giving ample notice to his colleagues. If he departed from the Congress policy as laid down today, it would be only because he would be driven to it. He undoubtedly holds strong views on Socialism. It is necessary, in order to understand the mighty force that Jawaharlal is, to understand what he stands for. He does not stand for Russian Communism. It will be Indian Socialism with a different colouring, though the fundamentals will be common. His policy is in course of formation. The application of Socialism to the Indian conditions is in the melting pot. Socialism as a cult is well-known. Whether Socialism of that undiluted type can govern Indian conditions for generations is a question. Jawaharlal's pronounced views on Socialism don't frighten me at all, and should not frighten anybody. Don't be disturbed over a sane and honest man like Jawaharlal."

Q. What effect would his views make on the crowds?

A. If Jawaharlal or other workers go to the crowds, they don't speak in the same strain as in writing. Jawaharlal's method of working in the crowds is not of inflaming them. I cannot say that of every one of the workers. I can only warn co-workers and the people. I don't deny that there is a danger of the masses misinterpreting a message of this character. Safety, however, lies in the fact that masses won't be able to reduce this to action for generations.

Q. What about the agrarian movement?

A. The tenants, who are putting in labour, have also a right to the land. They must have a just share of the produce of their labour. I would work for all I am worth for the labourers. This will take a certain course. Honesty allied with enlightenment will prosper. Whatever the Government may do, the tremendous awakening among the people will not die out. All awakening is for the good. We are too near our own times to judge; but the fact that, side by side with the tremendous awakening among the masses, there has been so little violence is staggering. I am an old man. But when the history of these times will be written, this one fact will be noted down. The actual holder of the land must be one who works in the sweat of his brow.

—*Conversations of Gandhiji* : p. 52.

42. CONVICTION OF PANDIT NEHRU

Q. What is your opinion about the conviction of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru?*

A. My opinion is that the conviction of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is most unfair from several points of view. He was doing yeoman's service in connection with Bihar relief. He is one of the ablest organizers we have in the country. His capacity for work is enviable for all, and he had thrown himself heart and soul into the work. I do feel that he should have been left alone to do that humanitarian work.

—*Conversations of Gandhiji* : p. 88.

*Pandit Nehru was just then (February 1934) convicted at Calcutta and sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

43. A TALK WITH TWO SOCIALISTS

Gandhiji had a talk with two Socialists at Poona on June 25, 1934. The Congress Working Committee had passed a little earlier a resolution referring to 'loose talk'. This had perturbed Socialist circles. Gandhiji, therefore, began with an explanation about the resolution. He said :

In the resolution, there is no attack on the Socialist Party as the Socialist Party. I framed it for welcoming the group. Have you seen my letter to Masani? I have read your programme. There are two or three things in it incapable of being achieved without violence, *i.e.*, without usurpation. Never compromise on fundamental principles. I claim to be a Socialist because of my belief and conduct. In South Africa, our people saw the beauty of what I propounded. There is victory without shedding blood. You should purge the document (*i.e.*, your programme) of everything that is incompatible with your creed of non-violence. I say 'non-violence', because the word 'peaceful' in the Congress creed means 'non-violent'. If those who are at the helm of affairs are not worth their salt, they must be swept off the board. Why don't you do as Jawaharlal did at the Karachi Congress? Your very wording shows that you can't achieve the thing without violence. Jawaharlal would have consulted me, he would have waited for my criticism, and not hurled this programme on the Congress and the country.

Socialists : No Socialist Programme can stand without class war.

Gandhiji : There need be no class war. Why do you wear the cap? The Working Committee has welcomed the Socialist Party. You can take it as a compliment. The Working Committee disapproves irresponsible speech. Instead of wearing the hat and saying that this is a direct attack on you, you could surely have said that this is simply a warning to those who indulge in irresponsible speech. It would not be worthy of the Working Committee if it made a flank attack. If Jawaharlal were out, your programme would not have been framed as you have framed it. He would have got it altered, or there would have been a division.

Write a letter to Jamnalalji and to me. I will give the answer. Say you have taken the resolution as a direct attack on the party. Can the Congress not condemn loose talk? You are unnecessarily tender. The Congress machinery cannot run if the Congress does not condemn the things that deserve to be condemned. You will find on record Congress resolutions condemning actions of Congressmen who have gone out of the creed of non-violence. I claim to have as much regard for Jawaharlal as any of you. In every step I take, I think of him. I have before myself a picture of Jawaharlal, and think of what he would say. Jawaharlal is my heir and successor so far as my hold on the Congress is concerned. I am discharging his stewardship. Then, there is Sardar Vallabhbhai. I know some things that I have done will displease him. I wrote to him: 'If you were out, I would convince you' That is my life. I may make mistakes and correct them.

—*Conversations of Gandhiji* : p. 124.

44. ADVICE TO THE ZAMINDARS

Class war is foreign to the essential genius of India, which is capable of evolving Communism on the fundamental rights of all on equal justice. *Ramarajya* of my dream ensures rights alike of prince and pauper.

You may be sure that I shall throw the whole weight of my influence in preventing class war. Supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property, you will find me fighting on your side.

There is nothing in the Congress creed or policy that need frighten you. All your fears and misgivings, permit me to tell you, are those of guilty conscience. Wipe out injustices, you may have been consciously or unconsciously guilty of, and shed all fear of Congress and Congressmen. Once you turn a new leaf in relations between *Zamindars* and *ryots*, you will find us on your side guarding your private rights and property.

When I say 'us,' I have Pandit Jawaharlal also in mind, for I am sure that on this essential principle of non-violence there is no difference between us. He does indeed talk of nationalization of property, but it need not frighten you. The

nation cannot own property except by vesting it in individuals. It simply ensures its just and equitable use, and prevents all possible misuse; and I do not think you can have any possible objection to holding your property for the benefit of the *ryots*. *Ryots* themselves have no greater ambition than to live in peace and freedom and they will never grudge you possession of property, provided you use it for them.

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika* : August 2, 1934.

45. A GREAT NATIONAL LOSS

On learning about the passing away of Smt. Kamala Nehru at Geneva on February 28, 1936, Gandhiji sent the following telegraphic message to Smt. Motilal Nehru at Allahabad :

“Just received message Kamala's sad death. Sympathies of all of us with you all. You must all be brave. Love,
BAPU ”

In a short public statement he said :

“Mrs. Kamala Nehru's death is a great national loss. I had the privilege of knowing her intimately for years. I have not known a truer, braver and more God-fearing woman. May her life be a pattern for us all to follow !”

—*The Leader* : February 29, 1936.

46. ‘MAY EVERYTHING BE WELL WITH YOU !’

Delhi.

March, 9, 1936.

My dear Jawaharlal,

So you return leaving Kamala for ever in Europe. And yet her spirit was never out of India and will always be your precious treasure as it will be of many of us. I shall never forget the final talk that melted our four eyes.*

*On the eve of her departure for Europe, Gandhiji had a talk with Smt. Kamala Nehru in Bombay for two hours on May 22, 1935. After the talk, Gandhiji said to the Press correspondents : “Kamala is much better than I expected her to be,” and added that she would stay in Europe as long as it was necessary to do so. She was going there full of hope and “I have the highest expectation about her returning to India in full vigour.”

Heavy responsibility awaits you here. It is laid on you because you are well able to bear it. I dare not come to you as I would have, if my body had regained its original elasticity. There is nothing organically wrong with me. The body has even gained in weight. But it has lost the vitality it seemed to have only three months ago. Strange to say, I never felt any illness. And yet the body had become weak and the instrument registered high blood pressure. I have to be careful!

I am in Delhi to rest for a few days. If your original plan had been carried out, I would have remained in Wardha for our meeting. It would have been quieter there for you. But if it is the same thing to you, we may meet in Delhi where I should be till 23rd instant at least. But if you prefer Wardha, I can return there earlier. If you come to Delhi, you could stay with me in Harijan quarters newly built in Kingsway—quite a good place. You will tell me, when you can, the date of our meeting. Rajendra Babu and Jammalalji are or will be with you. Vallabhnbhai also would have been, but we all thought it would be better if he stayed away. The other two have gone there not for political discussion, but for condolence. The political discussion will take place when we have all met and when you have finished the domestic work.

I hope Indu bore well the grief of Kamala's death and the almost immediate separation from you. What is her address?

May everything be well with you !

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 358.

47. TWO OUTSTANDING TRAITS

One could not but have been struck forcibly with two outstanding traits in the character of our beloved leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as one saw him at work during the past hectic weeks in Allahabad and Lucknow—pre-occupation, without rest or respite, with the problem of the poverty, the unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the vast

mass of our countrymen, and a tender regard for the poor and the down-trodden. Often, in the midst of his heavy pre-occupation, I have seen him giving a tender and patient hearing to miserable-looking waifs and strays who came to the doors of *Anand Bhavan* and who required perhaps nothing so much as a sweet word. And yet, I have seen him lose patience with those who seemed to him to go through life in blissful ignorance of life's sole purpose. A man one day came to him with a number of books. He received the books thankfully, but when the man pressed him to promise to read the books as he, the author, attached considerable importance to them, he said :

"You are talking of your religion. Well, let me tell you that my religion is Socialism. I have no other religion and I should be loath to find time to read any books which do not tell me something about the problem of relieving the poverty and the misery of India."

There are, in his Presidential Address, the superb phrasing of which carried even the English editor of *The Statesman* off his feet, many passages which will live ; but the passage which I prize most and which I think will live as a message to all the workers in the cause of humanity is this :

"But what of us who remain behind with a heavier burden to carry ? There is no rest for us or for those who languish in prison or in detention camp. We cannot rest, for rest is betrayal of those who have gone and in going handed the torch of freedom to us to keep alight ; it is betrayal of the cause we have espoused and the pledge we have taken ; it is betrayal of the millions who never rest."

And though in Lucknow he never had enough time to sleep or to rest his tired nerves, he accepted Sjt. Shankerlal Banker's request to speak on the Exhibition and the village industries. In that passionate utterance of close on an hour, he harked back to the millions who never rest and said that the object of all our activity—political as well as non-political—could be but one, *viz.*, to relieve the boundless poverty and starvation and nakedness and ignorance of those who toil for

us without rest, and that anything that was offered us—whether they were the Reforms or a new creed of life—must be measured by that only test. He explained how the vital creed of Socialism, which he held with all his head and heart, was the only remedy.

“That is the only way to remedy the lopsidedness of the present regime. Those who have little are taxed to an extent that leaves them with less; those who have much are taxed to an extent which does not affect them at all. Socialism will equalize the burdens on all, *i.e.*, will impose them according to the capacity of the taxed, and will extend equal opportunities to all. There is no comparison today between a peasant and myself. I may denude myself of all possessions and turn a pauper, but even then there will be no comparison between him and me. I will still have something which will enable me to face the world; the peasant has nothing. His grinding poverty has crushed all initiative out of him. He goes about amongst us like a scared animal, not knowing what to do with himself. That is because he has had no opportunity. I do not say that men are equal or that they can be made equal. Inequality due to difference of talent will remain, but 95 per cent of our workers do not get the opportunity to uplift themselves. It is Socialism alone that can give them equality of opportunity.”

In this speech, he dealt at length with the question of industrialism or handicrafts. In his Presidential Address, he had said he believed “in the rapid industrialization of the country” and that *Khadi* and village industries were “temporary expedients of a transition stage rather than as solutions of our vital problem.” But he made his position clearer in this speech.

“There are, no doubt, two ways to fight unemployment, *viz.*, industrialization and handicrafts. But one does not contradict the other. I want industrialization, but I also know that it is not free from exploitation today. If we had power in our hands, we might have tried both the remedies; but today we have no control on our industrial ventures, and we cannot ensure

freedom from exploitation. There is, therefore, only one remedy open to us today, *viz.*, the development of our handicrafts. The growing unemployment of our youths appals me. Work is the only cure for their disease, and even if the pursuit of handicrafts may not have much material result, the very fact, that one is employed or engaged in productive activity of some kind or other, is enough to infuse life into him. Work alone can hearten and energize and vitalize us, and handicrafts have that potentiality.

"Look at the composition of our unemployed. Among the 55 lakhs of our wandering *Sadhus* there may be a *Mahatma* or two, but the rest are a burden on the country. But why blame the *Sadhus*? There are quite a number of our propertied classes who are equally unemployed and more criminally unemployed. The *Sadhus* make no return for what they eat. These return even much less, when we think of the quantities they consume. Whoever fails to produce more than he consumes is a burden on the country. As a lawyer I may earn fat fees, but my labour is not productive. I simply relieve my clients of part of their property. A *zamindar* produces no wealth. He simply shares in the wealth produced by his tenants. A *sowcar* likewise adds nothing to the wealth of the country. But in our wretched topsy-turvy world, he who does no work seems to monopolize all possessions, and he who toils has no possessions at all.

"But let us realize that these possessions do not constitute wealth. These possessions would be of no avail to you, if you were like Robinson Crusoe cast on a desert island. Wealth is the product of manual labour. Our peasant adds to our national wealth, our artisans and handicraftsmen add to our wealth, and the more wealth that we can produce the better for us. This Exhibition is not a spectacular show, but is one to study and to profit by. I appeal to you to go to it again and again, to study the various

processes of producing and adding to our wealth and to learn some of them." (M.D.)

—*Harijan* : April 25, 1936.

48. A FALSE ALARM

When I saw a newspaper report purporting to be a summary of what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said on *Khadi* during his recent visit to the *Khadi Bhandar* at Bombay, I refused to believe it. It seemed to me to be so thoroughly contrary to what I had understood to be his considered view about *Khadi*. I, therefore, sent the cutting to the Pandit, and the following is the reply he promptly sent me :

"I attended and spoke at several dozen meetings in Bombay—I have lost count of them—and had no time to see reports. I spoke in Hindustani of course, and reporting was no easy matter; and then condensed reports are apt to be misleading. The report of what I said on *Khadi* was, however, pointed out to me and was corrected the same day or the next day. What I had said was that for many reasons—economic, political, social—*Khadi* was an important item in our present programme and must be encouraged. But that I did not think that it could finally solve our poverty problem, especially if the present social system continued. This system transferred the improvements and additional earnings of the peasant to the landlord. But I pointed out that this theoretical argument did not apply today. For this I said that although I was in favour of big industry, I believed that even with the increase of industrialization there would be considerable room for the development of cottage industries in India. At present, of course, they were even more important from various points of view."

This position may not satisfy 'wholehoggers'. But it is vastly different from the misleading report. Such misreporting is the lot of public men, especially in India, where they have to speak in an Indian language which reporters do not

always understand and which has invariably to be translated into English for the purpose of transmission by wire. The moral is, the public should wait for authentic information before believing the so-called pronouncements of leaders on important matters.

From the letters I have received, I see that the report created great uneasiness among some *Khadi* workers. To them, I should like to give a warning. It is fortunate that, for all practical purposes, what Pandit Jawaharlal actually says is satisfactory. He is too noble to say anything to please anybody, if he does not believe in it. The quotation from his letter, therefore, derives added weight from the fact that the helmsman of the Congress holds views favourable to *Khadi*. But *Khadi* workers should know that there are many important public men outside the Congress who decry *Khadi* and would never touch it. They should know, too, that even in the Congress ranks there are some who do not believe in *Khadi*, who are never tired of ridiculing it, and use it merely as a measure of discipline till they succeed in banishing it from the Congress programme. *Khadi* has progressed in spite of these obstacles. No doubt, it would have made greater progress, if we had not such opposition to contend against.

It is a matter of very great consolation that Pandit Jawaharlal believes in *Khadi* as he does. But what should *Khadi* workers do if he, on further study, finds it necessary to declare himself against it? I hope that after sixteen years of experience of *Khadi* and its possibilities, we have sufficient number of confirmed believers whose faith in it is based on their own knowledge of its working. If it is still a derived faith, the prophecy of a great journalist will undoubtedly come true that on my death *Khadi* will also die, and that the wheels that would be broken after the natural event, would be sufficient for full cremation of the body.

This nervousness over the false alarm is a portent, if it is a token of weak faith of *Khadi* workers. I suggest to them that they examine their own position and if they have doubts about the great economic importance of *Khadi*, let them revise their attitude.

—*Harijan* : June 6, 1936.

49. FOR KHADI WEARERS

Q. I have been a firm believer in *Khadi* and have still my fullest faith in its efficacy to solve most of our evils. It has got a wonderful psychological effect on many minds. Since 1920, I have been religiously wearing and propagating *Khadi*. But Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has so much minimized the importance, necessity and utility of *Khadi* that many staunch *Khadi* wearers are placed in a fix and the weaker believers have got a secure shelter behind Panditji. The Congress has also relaxed the rigidity in the use of *Khadi* and, you seem to be finding solace in your determined silence. Would you just guide us and let us know our duty under the present circumstances?

A. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was, as has been made clear by him, misreported. In common with the other believers in *Khadi*, till the country has attained its freedom, he thinks *Khadi* to be a vital necessity. His doubt about its economic value has place, if at all, only when Independence is achieved and industrialization on a vast scale takes place in the country. Surely, no wise man will give up *Khadi* now for fear of its being overwhelmed by industrialization, which may or may not envelop India in the far-off future. The restrictions on private producers are intended as well in the interests of artisans, especially the spinners, as the buyers. If they are removed, the market will be flooded with spurious *Khadi* resulting in spinners being put out of work and the buyers being deceived.

—*Harijan* : July 4, 1936.

50. A TRAGI-COMEDY

Segaon.

UNREVISED BY ME

July 15, 1936.

Dear Jawaharlal,

I hope you got my wire about the *T* of *I* letter. I procured it yesterday and read it through. Nobody has ever written to me about the subject matter. My reading of the

letter confirms my views that you should take legal notice of the libel.

If you will not misunderstand me, I would like you to keep me free of the Civil Liberties Union. I do not like, for the time being, to join any political institution. And there is no meaning in a confirmed civil resister joining it. Apart, however, from my joining or not joining the Union, maturer consideration confirms me in my opinion that it would be a mistake to appoint Sarojini* or, for that matter, any civil resister as President. I am still of opinion that the President should be a well known constitutional lawyer. If that does not commend itself to you, then you should have an author of note who is not a law-breaker. I would also ask you to restrict the number of members. You need quality, not quantity.

Your letter is touching. You feel to be the most injured party. The fact is that your colleagues have lacked your courage and frankness. The result has been disastrous. I have always pleaded with them to speak out to you freely and fearlessly. But having lacked the courage, whenever they have spoken, they have done it clumsily and you have felt irritated. I tell you they have dreaded you, because of your irritability and impatience of them. They have chafed under your rebukes and magisterial manner and above all your arrogation of what has appeared to them your infallibility and superior knowledge. They feel that you have treated them with scant courtesy and never defended them from Socialists' ridicule and even misrepresentation.

You complain of their having called your activities harmful. That was not to say that you were harmful. Their letter was no occasion for recounting your virtues or your services. They were fully conscious of your dynamism and your hold over the masses and the youth of the country. They know that you cannot be dispensed with. And so they wanted to give way.

I look upon the whole affair as a tragi-comedy. I would, therefore, like you to look at the whole thing in a lighter vein. I do not mind your taking the A.-I.C.C. into your

*Smt. Sarojini Naidu.

confidence. But I do want you not to impose on it the unbearable task of adjusting your family quarrels or choosing between them and you. Whatever you do, you must face them with accomplished things.

Why do you resent their majority being reflected in all sub-committees, etc.? Is it not the most natural thing? You are in office by their unanimous choice, but you are not in power yet. To put you in office was an attempt to find you in power quicker than you would otherwise have been. Anyway, that was at the back of my mind when I suggested your name for the Crown of Thorns. Keep it on, though the head be bruised. Resume your humour at the committee meetings. That is your most usual role, not that of a care-worn, irritable man ready to burst on the slightest occasion.

How I wish you could telegraph to me that on finishing my letter you felt as merry as you were on that New Year's Day in Lahore, when you were reported to have danced round the Tricolour Flag!

You must give your throat a chance.

I am revising my statement. I have decided not to publish it till you have seen it.

I have decided that nobody should see our correspondence besides Mahadev.

Love,
BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 359.

. 51. ARE WE RIVALS?

I have had two typical cuttings sent to me giving altogether false news about relations between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself. Remarks said to have been made by me have been reproduced in quotation marks. Thus, I am reported to have said : "My life work is ruined" (*i.e.*, by Jawaharlal's programme), "not even the firmness and repression of the British Government have harmed my work as much as the policy outlined by Nehru."

I have never said anything of the kind, nor uttered one

single remark attributed to me in the two articles sent to me. What is more, I have not even entertained the opinions contained in them. So far as I am aware, Jawaharlal has come to the conclusion that India's freedom cannot be gained by violent means. And I know for a fact that he did not in Lucknow "come out for the use of violence in the struggle for Independence." *

No doubt, there are differences of opinion between us. They were clearly set forth in the letters we exchanged some years ago, and in reply to correspondents, I hope at an early date to bring up our differences to date. But they do not affect our personal relations in any way whatsoever. We remain the same adherents to the Congress goal that we have ever been. My life-work is not, cannot be ruined by Jawaharlal's programme, nor have I ever believed for that matter that it has been harmed even by "the firmness and repression of the British Government."

My philosophy, if I can be said to have any, excludes the possibility of harm to one's cause by outside agencies. The harm comes deservedly and only when the cause itself is bad, or, being good, its champions are untrue, faint-hearted, or unclean. The article in question refers to "Gandhi's secret plans." If I know Gandhi at all, I can vouchsafe for it that he never had any secret plans in his life. And if beyond what the readers of *Harijan* know there is no plan that I can disclose, it is because I know none myself.

Then, one of the articles presents Jawaharlal and me as rivals. I cannot think of myself as a rival to Jawaharlal or him to me. Or if we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal. And if, in the joint work for reaching the goal, we at times seem to be taking different routes, I hope the world will find that we had lost sight of each other only for the moment, and only to meet again with greater mutual attraction and affection.

—*Harijan*: July 25, 1936.

*"Elected President of the Indian National Congress at its recent meeting at Lucknow, Nehru came out for the 'use of violence' in the struggle for independence, and is reported to be planning a movement to shake British rule in India."

52. MY FEELING ABOUT NEHRU

Miss Lecler : What is the truth about the supposed antagonism between you and Nehru ?

Gandhiji : You must see my disclaimer.

Miss Lecler : I have seen it.

Gandhiji : I have said that it was an absolute travesty, an absolute falsehood.

Miss Lecler : What is your feeling about Nehru ?

Gandhiji : My feeling about Nehru is nothing but that of love and admiration. We are not estranged from each other. I hear from him nearly twice a week. There are things on which I do not talk the same way. There are obvious differences of outlook, but, in spite of them, our affection has not diminished. And these differences are not new. He has never kept from me whatever he has felt from time to time. Even what he said in Lucknow was not new. It was a summary of views he had stated in different places on different occasions.

Miss Lecler : But you don't see the truth entirely his way ?

Gandhiji : I don't. But it is one thing to say that I do not sympathize with some of his views, and quite another to say that he had ruined my life-work ! It is a lie. There is no other name for it. I have never had even the suspicion that Jawaharlal's policy has ruined any part of my work.

Miss Lecler : Because the truth you stand for is still there ?

Gandhiji : That is a truism. I am not talking from that higher philosophical point of view. I am just talking in mundane terms. I want to say that he has taken no such steps as would ruin my programme or my work. If he had said : 'You have blundered all along. You must retrace your steps. You have taken the country back a century', as some have certainly said, he, because he is he, would embarrass me. But he has said nothing of the kind. Also, it is not wholly true to say that I do not sympathize with his programme. What is he doing today with which I cannot sympathize ? His enunciation of scientific Socialism does not

jar on me. I have been living the life since 1906 that he would have all India to live. To say that he favours Russian Communism is a travesty of truth. He says it is good for Russia, but he does not give an unequivocal certificate to it even about Russia. As for India, he has said plainly that the methods to be adopted in India would have to answer India's needs. He does not say that there must be a class war, though he thinks it may be inevitable; and only recently he declared emphatically that there should be no confiscation without compensation. There is nothing in all this which I oppose. Nevertheless, there are differences of method; but to say they make us opponents or rivals is a caricature.

Miss Lecler : Are you fond of him ?

Gandhiji : Yes, as I am fond of you. But that is not saying anything much.

Miss Lecler : Do you approve of him for India ?

Gandhiji : Yes.

—*Harijan* : August 28, 1936.

53. 'MAKE ME UNDERSTAND'

Segaon.

August 28, 1936.

My dear Jawaharlal,

Our conversation of yesterday has set me thinking. Why is it that with all the will in the world, I cannot understand what is so obvious to you? I am not, so far as I know, suffering from intellectual decay. Should you not then set your heart on at least making me understand what you are after? I may not agree with you. But I should be in a position to say so. Yesterday's talk throws no light on what you are after. And probably what is true of me is true of some others. I am just now discussing the thing with Raja. I should like you to discuss your programme with him, if you can spare the time. I must not write at length having no time. You know what I mean.

Love,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 360.

54. 'LIKE KING CANUTE'

When Pandit Jawaharlal was here the other day *en route* to Madras, he spent two or three hours at Segaoon without, however, getting as much of that time as he wanted with Gandhiji. He knew that Miraben had been ill and so greeted her with the words: "How are you now? I hear you have not been behaving yourself." "You are right," she said, "but I have been behaving myself for a week or so, and have just got ready to nurse others who are not behaving themselves." As a matter of fact, there are now two beds in the verandah of that little cottage in Segaoon with patients suffering not from simple malaria, but some kind of enteric fever. A suggestion for their removal to the hospital was made, but Gandhiji simply turned it down, insisting on nursing the patients himself, sponging them, giving them wet-sheet packs, hip-baths and so on. And he was in the midst of these operations, when Panditji with Rajendrababu and the Sardar arrived, with the result that they had to keep waiting for a good deal of the time set apart for them.

"If you have no time," said the Sardar in his characteristic way, "we had better go."

And Gandhiji smilingly explained how difficult it had been with the patients he had on hand.

"But," said Pandit Jawaharlal, "isn't it like King Canute trying to stop the waves, or like someone else trying to mop the tide?"

"That is why we have made YOU the King Canute," said Gandhiji, "so that you may do it better than others."

"But is there no better way? Must you do all these things yourself?"

"Who else is to do it? If you go to the village near by, you will find that out of 600 people there, 300 are ill. Are they all to go to the hospital? We have to learn to treat ourselves. We are suffering for our own sins. You must have seen in the series of articles Pyarelal has written on the water problem in Bengal, that we have brought on all the diseases like malaria, cholera, and the rest ourselves. How

are we to teach these poor villagers except by personal example?" (M.D.)

—*Harijan* : October 10, 1936.

55. CONVERSION BY PATIENT PERSUASION

"I cannot speak with either the definiteness or the confidence of a Stalin or a Hitler," said Gandhiji to Mr. Basil Mathews, "as I have no cut and dried programme which I can impose on the villagers. My method, I need not say, is different. I propose to convert by patient persuasion. This is a kind of practical adult education to be put to use as it progresses. The centre is automatically shifted from the cities to the villages. They will be taught to know what they should want and how to obtain it in the shape of sanitation and hygiene, improvement of material conditions and social relations. If this primary education is taken by them in its fulness, everything else follows. But in indicating the ideal, I have told you of the difficulties of this stupendous task. For, you should know that we have smaller, more illiterate villages even than Segaoon, where people hug their ignorance and dirt, as they do their untouchability. Lionel Curtis, when he wrote that the Indian village consisted of dilapidated structures built on dung-heaps, did not overdraw the picture. We have to remove the dung-heaps, turn them to good account and make the village site a smiling garden."

Mr. Basil Mathews had, perhaps, other things at the back of his mind when he talked of *the* constructive revolution, and so he discussed the place of the money-lender and the *zamin-dar* in the village economy. "The money-lender who is inevitable today," said Gandhiji, "will gradually eliminate himself. Nor are co-operative banks needed, because when I have taught Harijans the art I want to teach them, they will not need such ready money. Besides, those who are today deep down in mire cannot make use of co-operative banks. I am not so much concerned in getting them loans of money or plots of land, as I am about getting them bread and butter and even a little cheese. When people have learnt the art of turning idle hours to wealth, all the adjustment we need will follow."

"But what about the *zamindar*? Would you eliminate him? Would you destroy him?"

"I do not want to destroy the *zamindar*, but neither do I feel that the *zamindar* is inevitable. I will illustrate how I work out my trusteeship theory here. In this village, Jamnalalji has a 75 per cent share. Of course, I have come here not by design but by accident. When I approached Jamnalalji for help, he built me the required hut and out-houses and said : 'Whatever profit there is from Segaon, you may take for the welfare of the village.' If I can persuade other *zamindars* to do likewise, village improvement becomes easy. Of course, the next question is that of the land system and that of Government exploitation. I regard the difficulties surrounding that aspect of the question as, for the moment, necessary evils. If the present programme is carried through, I shall perhaps know how to deal with the Government exploitation."

"Your actual economic policy would differ from Mr. Nehru's? He, so far as I understand him, would wipe out the *zamindar*."

"Yes," said Gandhiji, "we seem to differ in our ideas of village uplift and reconstruction. The difference is of emphasis. He does not mind the village uplift movement. He believes in industrialization; I have grave doubt about its usefulness for India. He believes in the ultimate inevitability of class conflict, though he would avoid it if he could. I expect to convert the *zamindars* and other capitalists by the non-violent method and, therefore, there is for me nothing like an inevitability of class conflict. For, it is an essential part of non-violence to go along the line of least resistance. The moment the cultivators of the soil realize their power, the *zamindari* evil will be sterilized. What can the poor *zamindar* do when they say that they will simply not work the land, unless they are paid enough to feed and clothe and educate themselves and their children in a decent manner? In reality, the toiler is the owner of what he produces. If the toilers intelligently combine, they will become an irresistible power. That is how I do not see the necessity of class conflict. If I thought it inevitable, I should not hesitate to preach it and teach it." (M.D.)

---*Harijan* : December 5, 1936.

56. LIFE IS ITS OWN EXPRESSION

Q. May not one, in all humility, say : 'I know that my life falls far short of the ideal, let me explain the ideal I stand for' ?

A. No. You bid good-bye to humility the moment you say that life is not adequate and that you must supplement it by speech. Human species need not go to animals and shout to them : 'We are humans'. The animals know them as humans. The language of the soul never lends itself to expression. It rises superior to the body. Language is a limitation of the Truth which can be only represented by life.

Q. How, then, is experience to be passed on from generation to generation without some articulate expression ?

A. There is no occasion for articulate expression. Life is its own expression. I take the simile of the rose I used years ago. The rose does not need to write a book or deliver a sermon on the scent it sheds all around, nor on the beauty which everyone who has eyes can see. Well, spiritual life is infinitely superior to the beautiful and fragrant rose, and I make bold to say that the moment there is a spiritual expression in life, the surroundings will readily respond. There are passages in the *Bible*, the *Gita*, the *Bhagavat*, the *Quran*, which eloquently show this. "Wherever," we read, "Krishna appeared, people acted like those possessed." The same thing about Jesus.

But to come nearer home, why are people touched, as if by magic, wherever Jawaharlal goes? They sometimes do not even know he has come, and yet they take sudden fire from the very thought that he is coming. Now, there it may not be described as a spiritual influence, but there is a subtle influence and it is unquestionably there, call it by what name you like. They do not want to hear him, they simply want to see him. And that is natural. You cannot deal with millions in any other way. Spiritual life has greater potency than Marconi waves. When there is no medium between me and my Lord and I simply become a willing vessel for His influences to flow into it, then I overflow as the water of the Ganges at

its source. There is no desire to speak when one lives the Truth. Truth is most economical of words.

—*Harijan* : December 12, 1936.

57. MEANING AND MESSAGE OF CHARKHA

I said in 1920 that, if the Congress truly and successfully worked the programme laid down in 1920, including the four-fold constructive programme of *Khadi*, communal unity, prohibition of intoxicants and removal by Hindus of untouchability, the attainment of *Swaraj* within a year was a certainty. I am neither sorry for, nor ashamed of, having made that declaration. I would like to repeat that declaration. Whenever the fourfold programme is achieved in its fulness, you can have *Swaraj* for the asking. For, you will then have attained the power to take it

This is the non-violent way in action. If we could fulfil this programme, there would be no need to offer civil disobedience, there would certainly be no need to do violence. Thirty-five crores of people, conscious of their numerical strength as one man, would be ashamed of doing violence to 70,000 White men in India, no matter how capable they are of dealing destruction and administering poison gas to millions in a moment. The *Charkha*, understood intelligently, can spin not only economic salvation, but can also revolutionize our minds and hearts and demonstrate to us that the non-violent approach to *Swaraj* is the safest and the easiest. Though the progress may seem slow, it will prove quickest in the long run.

Believe me, if Jawaharlal is not in jail today, it is not because he is afraid of it. He is quite capable of walking into prison doors, as of mounting the gallows with a smile on his lips. I do not think I have lost the power or faith in the efficacy of such suffering. But there is no issue for it today, as far as I can see. But what I feel is that all that suffering can be avoided, if, by united faith and will, we achieve the constructive programme. If we can, I promise that we won't need to struggle with or against the British nation, but Lord Linlithgow will come to us and own that he was mistaken in his disbelief of our Non-violence and Truth, and will under-

take on behalf of his nation to abide by our decisions. Whether he does or not, I am working towards that end and no other. "All belongs to God."

—*Harijan* : January 2, 1937.

58. DIFFERENCES ON SOCIALISM

Q. Is there any difference of opinion between you and Jawaharlal in respect of Socialism?

A. There is, but it is a difference in emphasis. He, perhaps, puts an emphasis on the result, whereas I put on the means. Perhaps, according to him, I am putting an over-emphasis on non-violence; whereas he, though he believes in non-violence, would want to have Socialism by other means, if it was impossible to have it by non-violence. Of course, my emphasis on non-violence becomes one of principle. Even if I was assured that we could have independence by means of violence, I should refuse to have it. It won't be real independence.

Q. But do you think the English will leave India to you and go back peacefully as a result of your non-violent agitation?

A. I do think so.

Q. What is the basis of your belief?

A. I base my faith in God and His justice.

—*Harijan* : February 13, 1937.

59. KHADI IN SWADESHI EXHIBITIONS

In all other parts of India, where *Swadeshi* Exhibitions permitting mill-cloth are held, the A.I.S.A. has, as a rule, refused to exhibit *Khadi*. And the rule has answered the purpose for which it was framed. From U.P., however, the pressure has come to relax the rule. But I have hitherto resisted the temptation. U.P. *Khadi* workers made a special reference for their guidance. They are almost all Congressmen no less ardent than the others, but they have dedicated themselves to the Congress service through its constructive and the most difficult programme, *Khadi*. Appreciating their difficulty,

I referred the question to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru for his opinion. I have received the following reply from him :

“ I have your letter of the 5th March, enquiring about *Khadi* at exhibitions. This matter has been repeatedly discussed by us in the course of the past year ever since my return from Europe. The U.P. Provincial Congress Committee organized one or two exhibitions two three years back. Since then, they have not repeated this. But occasionally some of our District Committees organize exhibitions. Even this has grown rarer now. Exhibitions organized by *Swadeshi Sabhas*, however, continue. Last November, the Allahabad *Swadeshi League* had their annual exhibition. As usual, they exhibited mill-cloth. They wanted me to open the exhibition. For several months, I refused to agree because of this *Khadi* matter. Ultimately, however, I agreed to do so for various reasons, chiefly local. I felt that my refusal would be misinterpreted and would do us some injury. In my opening speech there, I dealt largely with this question of *Khadi*.

“ The question you have put is not easy to answer. The average *Khadi* worker seems to be of opinion that *Khadi* should not be exhibited, if mill-cloth is allowed there. Other Congress workers are usually of a contrary opinion on the ground that at such exhibitions there is usually a good sale of *Khadi*. Obviously, the opinion of the *Khadi* worker, who is presumed to be an expert at his job and who is anxious to push *Khadi*, should be almost final. I would, therefore, hesitate to give my decision against him unless I succeed in convincing him. I imagine that, from a certain long distance view, it is better even to incur some loss now so as to avoid producing any confusion in the public mind as to what *Khadi* is and what it is not. This can only be done by adherence to the present policy of banning certified *Khadi* sales in such exhibitions.

“ At the same time, I find that uncertified *Khadi* is sold at such exhibitions and plenty of people patronize it. There are quite large numbers of people, as you know, who are not particularly keen on buying certified *Khadi*, but who are prepared to do so if it comes their

way. The point is : Are we to cater for the people in any especial measure, or are we to concentrate on holding fast to those who desire to use pure *Khadi* only ? This question has not only its business side, but also its psychological side. *Khadi* has, on the one hand, built up a firm foundation for itself, and there is a body of men in the country who must have pure *Khadi* whatever the cost or the trouble. At the same time, *Khadi* does not spread as rapidly as it might among other classes who only occasionally patronize it. For *Khadi* workers, the object should be to develop the *Khadi* habit in the latter. That habit comes largely from appeals to the mind or heart, and partly from sheer habit. Ordinarily speaking, it would be a good thing to have as many casual purchasers as possible, so that they may get used to buying and wearing *Khadi* and thus develop the real habit. The present policy, to some extent, keeps away this casual purchaser and thus reduces the field from which regular *Khadi* buyers might be drawn.

"In regard to these exhibitions, there is another difficulty. Often enough, there is no real supervision over the stuffs that come in and textiles made of foreign yarn are taken, or even some stuffs which are largely foreign and have just a bit of Indian material and work on them. This may perhaps be got over with a more stringent control. But the usual Swadeshi League Committee is not frightfully taken over this matter.

"*Swadeshi* exhibitions often raise other issues also which cannot be ignored. For instance, last year, I decided to open it because I felt that any other decision on my part would have given rise to some trouble and bitterness and thus would have come in the way of our work.

"Therefore, if you want my final opinion, I cannot give it very definitely, and because of my not being so definite, I must respect the opinions of others who are working for *Khadi*. I am, however, inclined to think that it might be preferable to allow *Khadi* to be exhibited and sold in these exhibitions under certain conditions which would

prevent as far as possible (1) something else being mistaken for *Khadi* and the distinction between *Khadi* and mill-cloth being clearly preserved ; (2) the exclusion of partly foreign stuffs from the exhibition."

In the absence of final opinion which he is unable to give, he would respect the opinions of others who are working for *Khadi*. He is, however, "inclined to think that it might be preferable to allow *Khadi* to be exhibited and sold in these exhibitions." My own experience, however, tells me that it is dangerous to befog the mass mind by putting *Khadi* in juxtaposition with the gaudy mill-made cloth. It is very much like putting human beings side by side with robots. Human beings may be worsted in the competition, if they allow themselves to be compared to robots. Even so will *Khadi* fare, in comparison with mill-made cloth. The planes of the two are different. The aims are opposite. *Khadi* gives work to all, mill-cloth gives work to some and deprives many of honest labour. *Khadi* serves the masses, mill-cloth is intended to serve the classes. *Khadi* serves labour, mill-cloth exploits it. My experience is backed by that of the *Khadi* workers throughout India. I hope, therefore, that with Shri Jawaharlal Nehru the Congressmen of U.P. will respect the experience and the policy of the A.I.S.A. in preference to their own opinion, if it be against that of the A.I.S.A.

—*Harijan* : April 10, 1937.

60. JAWAHARLAL'S BELIEF IN CLASS WAR

A *Satyagrahi* is sometimes bound to use language which is capable of two meanings, provided both the meanings are obvious and necessary and there is no intention to deceive anyone. The language of the *Vedas* and the *Gita* often yields several meanings. Tulsidas' *Ramayana* has verses which often yield several meanings. Neither the authors nor the interpreters and commentators were untruthful. The Congress resolution is undoubtedly framed to satisfy two groups. Office acceptance is not obligatory. One who thinks it inconsistent with the object of ending the Act, will naturally not take office. If those who go to the legislatures are pledged to Truth and

Non-violence, fearlessness and selflessness, and if they were to accept ministerships on our terms, we could win *Swaraj* and make the present constitution give place to our own.

Jawaharlal does not think so. That is a difference that is fundamental between him and me. In the same way, he believes in the inevitability of class war and doubts the possibility of conversion of capitalists. No doubt, capital is lifeless, but not capitalists who are amenable to conversion. And yet, with these different beliefs, we work together. Jawaharlal works with his colleagues in the faith that he will convert them to his view one day. And his colleagues expect by association to convert him.

—*Harijan* : May 8, 1937.

61. 'DON'T SMILE OR BE ANGRY'

Segaon, Wardha.
June 25, 1937.

My dear Jawaharlal,

Just received your statement on the Frontier policy. Khan Saheb and I have read it. I like it very well. I wonder if the Spanish bombing and the British are exactly alike! Has the extent of the British damage been known? What has been the ostensible reason given for the British bombing? Don't smile or be angry that I do not know these things so well as you do. I can learn very little from the little I see of the newspapers. But don't trouble to answer my questions. I shall follow the reactions to your statement. May be, these will throw some light. And in any case you will fill in the gaps when we meet. I hope the Maulana* will come. But even if he cannot, I would like you to hold on the date. Let us have the three quiet days.

Hope Indu is well.

Love,
BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 361.

* Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

62. THE FUNCTION OF CONGRESS MINISTRIES

Segaon, Wardha,

July 15, 1937.

UNREVISED

My dear Jawaharlal,

Today is the election day. I am watching.

But this I write to tell you that I have begun to write on the function of Congress Ministries and allied topics. I hesitated, but I saw that it was my duty to write when I felt so keenly. I wish I could send you an advance copy of my article for *Harijan*. Mahadev will see this. If he has a copy, he will send it. When you see it, you will please tell if I may continue to write so. I do not want to interfere with your handling of the whole situation. For, I want the maximum from you for the country. I would be doing distinct harm, if my writing disturbed you.

I hope you got my letters about the Maulana.

Love,

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 361

63. HINDU-URDU CONTROVERSY

Segaon, Wardha.

July 30, 1937.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I hope Mahadev told you yesterday, in addition to acknowledging your essay on Hindi, that the Viceroy had invited me to Delhi on the 4th for no special reason but merely to have the pleasure of meeting him. I replied saying that he had anticipated me, for I wanted to seek an interview with him about the ban on Khan Sahib and my desire to visit the Frontier. I am accordingly reaching Delhi on the 4th. The appointment is for 11.30. Therefore, I hope to be able to leave the same day, returning to Segaon on the 5th.

But this letter is to send you a copy of Zakir's letter in

reply to my letter giving my reaction to the recent riot in Bombay and the wretched Hindi-Urdu controversy. I thought that I should share with you this considered letter.

I do not regard the Jhansi election as a rout. It is an honourable defeat, giving rise to the hope that if we plod away we can effectively take the Congress message to the Mussalmans. But I still abide by my opinion that the mere taking of the message, unaccompanied by substantial work in the villages, won't answer our purpose in the end. But it all depends upon the way in which we want to generate power.

Meherally's speech in Madras is an eye-opener for me. I wonder how far he represents the general Socialistic view. Rajaji* has sent me a cutting containing his speech. I hope he has sent a copy to you also. I call it a bad speech of which you should take notice. This is going contrary to the Congress policy as I read it.

There is also Roy's speech at Madras. I take it, you get all such cuttings. Nevertheless, for ready reference I enclose the cuttings which Pyarelal has made for me. Roy has been writing to me, too. You should see his latest letter. It will go with this, if I have not destroyed it. What is your reaction to his attitude? As I have already told you, I find it difficult to understand him.

Your calling *Khadi* 'livery of freedom' will live as long as we speak the English language in India. It needs a first class poet to translate into Hindi the whole of the thought behind that enchanting phrase. For me, it is not merely poetry but it enunciates a great truth, whose full significance we have yet to grasp.

Love,
BAPU

Though the para about Roy's speech follows the one about Meherally's, it is not to suggest that it is on a par with M's.

BAPU

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 361.

* C. Rajagopalachari.

64. 'LIVERY OF OUR FREEDOM'

I invite the reader's attention to the following from President Nehru's ringing appeal to the country to celebrate August 1st as the Ministry Day :

"I suggest, therefore, that meetings for this purpose be held all over India, in towns and villages, on a particular day, Sunday, August 1st, when the Working Committee's Resolution should be read out and explained and while offering camaraderie greetings to Congress Ministers, we should pledge ourselves anew to Independence and removal of poverty of our people. On that day, also the flag salutation ceremony should be solemnly performed everywhere. August 1st is a special and significant day for us, the day dedicated to India's freedom. On that day, seventeen years ago, great Lokamanya* passed away and on that very day India launched the Non-Co-operation Movement and began wielding that weapon which has strengthened and vitalized our people so greatly. It is fitting, therefore, that this day be suitably celebrated and we should remember the past and we should look to the future with the same determination which has held us for so long.

"I trust that as an earnest of this sympathy and goodwill, every Indian who stands for India's freedom will wear *Khadi*—the livery of our freedom—and will display and honour the National Flag. I trust also that the police force, which has long been hostile to our people, will think in terms of India and not of alien masters and will seek the co-operation and goodwill of the masses. Congress Ministries, if they mean anything at all, mean that the interests of these masses will be dominant."

The President, with his native gift of phrase, has beautifully described *Khadi* as 'the livery of our freedom'. Throughout his tour in Burma and Malaya Peninsula, he exhorted our countrymen to wear *Khadi*, no matter where they lived, because that was the distinguishing dress of an Indian, and

*Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

the sight of *Khadi*-clad Indians in those distant parts filled the President's heart with pride and joy. (*M.D.*)

—*Harijan* : July 31, 1937.

65. KHADI MENTALITY

Khadi, to me, is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and, therefore, ultimately, in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, 'the livery of India's freedom'.

Moreover, *Khadi* mentality means decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessities of life. Therefore, the formula so far evolved is, every village to produce all its necessities and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities.

Heavy industries will needs be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity, which will mainly be in the villages.

—*Constructive Programme* : p. 11.

66. ABOUT THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

On the train,
August 3, 1937.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I am writing this on the train taking us to Delhi. Here-with is my 'Foreword' or whatever it may be called. I could not give you anything elaborate.

You have 'perhaps' before Pushtu and Punjabi. I suggest your removing the adverb. Khan Saheb, for instance, will never give up Pushtu. I believe it is written in some script, I forget which. And Punjabi? The Sikhs will die for Punjabi written in Gurmukhi. There is no elegance about that script. But I understand that it was specially invented like Sindhi to isolate the Sikhs from the other Hindus. Whether such was the case or not, it seems to me impossible at present to persuade the Sikhs to give up Gurmukhi.

You have suggested a common script to be evolved out of the four Southern languages. It seems to me to be as easy for them to substitute Devanagari as a mixture of the four. From a practical standpoint, the four do not admit of an invented mixture. I would, therefore, suggest your confining yourself to the general recommendation that, wherever possible, the provincial languages, which have vital connection with Sanskrit, if they are not off-shoots from it, should adopt revised Devanagari. You may know that this propaganda is going on.

Then, if you think like me, you should not hesitate to express the hope that as Hindus and Muslims are one day bound to be one at heart they will also, who speak Hindustani, adopt one script, *i.e.*, Devanagari, because of its being more scientific and being akin to the great provincial scripts of the languages descended from Sanskrit.

If you adopt my suggestions, in part or in toto, you will have no difficulty in laying your finger on the spots recognizing the necessary changes. I had intended to do so myself in order to save your time. But I must not put that strain on my system just now.

I take it that my endorsement of your suggestions does not mean that I must ask the Hindi Sammelan to give up the use of the word 'Hindi'. I am sure, that cannot be your meaning. I have taken it to the farthest limit possible, as far as I can think.

If you cannot accept my suggestions, it would be better for the sake of accuracy to add the following sentence to the 'Foreword': "At any rate, I have no hesitation in heartily endorsing them in a general way."

I hope Indu's operation will go off well.

Love,
BAPU

Foreword

I have very carefully gone through Jawaharlal Nehru's essay on the Hindu-Urdu question. The question has latterly become an unfortunate controversy. There is no valid reason

for the ugly turn it has taken. Be that as it may, Jawaharlal's essay is a valuable contribution to proper elucidation of the whole subject considered from the national and purely educational point of view. His constructive suggestions, if they are widely accepted by persons concerned, should put an end to the controversy which has taken a communal turn. The suggestions are exhaustive and eminently reasonable.

August 3, 1937.

M. K. GANDHI

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 362.

67. HINDI-URDU QUESTION

From the valuable essay written by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, being No. 6 of the Congress Political and Economical Studies Series, I copy his following seventeen main suggestions :

"1. Our public work should be carried on and State education should be given in the language of each linguistic area. This language should be the dominant language in that area. The Indian languages to be recognized officially for this purpose are : Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu), Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi and, to some extent, Pushtu and Punjabi.

2. In the Hindustani speaking area, both Hindi and Urdu, with their scripts, should be officially recognized. Public notifications should be issued in both scripts. Either script might be used by a person in addressing a court or a public office, and he should not be called upon to supply a copy in the other script.

3. The medium of State instruction in the Hindustani area being Hindustani, both scripts will be recognized and used. Each pupil or his parents will make a choice of script. A pupil will not be compelled to learn both scripts, but may be encouraged to do so in the secondary stage.

4. Hindustani (both scripts) will be recognized as the All-India language. As such, it will be open to any

person throughout India to address a court or public office in Hindustani (either script) without any obligation to give a copy in another script or language.

5. An attempt should be made to unify the Devanagari, Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi scripts and to produce a composite script for printing, typing and the use of modern mechanical devices.

6. The Sindhi script should be absorbed in the Urdu script, which should be simplified, to the extent that is possible, and suited to printing, typing, etc.

7. The possibility of approximating the Southern scripts to Devanagari should be explored. If that is not considered feasible, then an attempt should be made to have a common script for the Southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

8. It is not possible for us to think in terms of the Latin script for our languages, for the present at least, in spite of various advantages which that script possesses. We must thus have two scripts : the composite Devanagari-Bengali-Gujarati-Marathi ; and the Urdu-Sindhi ; and, if necessary, a script for the Southern languages, unless this can be approximated to the first.

9. The tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani speaking area to diverge and develop separately need not be viewed with alarm, nor should any obstruction be placed in the development of either. This is, to some extent, natural as new and more abstruse ideas come into the language. The development of either will enrich the language. There is bound to be an adjustment later on as world forces and nationalism press in this direction, and mass education will bring a measure of standardization and uniformity.

10. We should lay stress on the language (Hindi, Urdu, as well as the other Indian languages) looking to the masses and speaking in terms of them. Writers should write for the masses in simple language understood by them, and they should deal with problems affecting the masses. Courtly and affected style and flowery phrases should be discouraged and simple vigorous style

developed. Apart from its other advantages, this will also lead to uniformity between Hindi and Urdu.

11. A Basic Hindustani should be evolved out of Hindustani on the lines of Basic English. This should be a simple language with very little grammar and a vocabulary of about a thousand words. It must be a complete language, good enough for all ordinary speech and writing, and yet within the framework of Hindustani and a stepping stone for the further study of that language.

12. Apart from Basic Hindustani, we should fix upon scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu) as well as, if possible, in other Indian languages. Where necessary, these words should be taken from foreign languages and bodily adopted. Lists of other words from our own languages should be made, so that in all technical and such like matters we might have a precise and uniform vocabulary.

13. The policy governing State education should be that education is to be given in the language of the student. In each linguistic area, education from the primary to the university stage will be given in the language of the province. Even within a linguistic area, if there are a sufficient number of students whose mother tongue is some other Indian language, they will be entitled to receive primary education in their mother tongue, provided they are easily accessible from a convenient centre. It may also be possible, if the number is large enough, to give them secondary education also in the mother tongue, but all such students will have to take, as a compulsory subject, the language of the linguistic area they live in.

14. In the non-Hindustani speaking areas, Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

15. The medium of instruction for university education will be the language of the linguistic area. Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language should be

compulsory subjects. This compulsion of learning additional languages need not apply to higher technical courses, though a knowledge of languages is desirable even there.

16. Provision for teaching foreign languages, as well as our classical languages, should be made in our secondary schools, but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain special courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

17. Translations should be made of considerable number of classical and modern works in foreign literatures into the Indian languages, so that our languages might develop contacts with the cultural, literary and social movements in other countries, and gain strength thereby."

Of course, the reader should procure the pamphlet for himself and study it with the care it deserves.

—*Harijan* : August 21, 1937.

68. THE PRESIDENT'S BEREAVEMENT

Even death would be proud to take Saruprani Nehru who, as Gandhiji said in his telegram to Pandit Jawaharlal, lived nobly and died nobly and whose eternal title to be a treasured memory of the nation will be that she gave Jawaharlal birth. Years ago, an Austrian writer—I think it was Renu Fulop Muller—wrote to me to enquire if there was any biography available of Gandhiji's mother! He had read about Gandhiji and wanted to write about him, but how could he do so without knowing the great mother who gave him birth? There is no biography of Gandhiji's mother, and there may be none written of Saruprani Nehru. But need there be anything more on record than that she was Jawaharlal Nehru's mother, to entitle her to lasting fame? Readers of Jawaharlal's Autobiography will remember the heroic figure depicted in a chapter full of noble pathos and subdued holy rage. She was the same heroic figure through the past 16 years of our nation's history, braving the blows of rough mischance in the shape of repeated imprisonments of her husband and all her children

and son-in-law, husband's death and daughter-in-law's death. That but serves to make a proud record prouder, a glorious record more glorious. The nation will reverence her memory with pride and affection.

Within exactly twenty-four hours of her death, also passed away suddenly and peacefully her sister who was a member of Pandit Jawaharlal's family, and whom everyone who has enjoyed the hospitality at *Anand Bhavan* cannot forget, for she often happened to be the solitary hostess from morning until midnight. Saruprani had been ailing for some years. Not so her sister who seemed to have an iron frame. But she could not possibly bear, it seems, the sister's separation. The hearts of every one of his countrymen and countrywomen will go out to the President in his double bereavement. (M.D.)

—*Harijan* : January 15, 1938.

69. TWO STURDY SPIRITS

We heard the other day of the President's double bereavement. Within twenty-four hours, two of the dearest links with the past were, physically at any rate, broken. Deep down in the President's heart there was the pang of separation from one's loved ones, and yet there was the heroic quality to face life with a cheer, a greater cheer perhaps because the days to follow would be made more sacred with the memory of the departed. He did not, therefore, tarry to mourn the loss, he plunged into work. With Gandhiji's permission, though not with Jawaharlal's, I take two paragraphs from his letter, which in one sense is too sacred to publish, but in another sense too elevating to be withheld from the public:

"*Anand Bhavan* is full of people today—relatives and others who have come. Yet it has a deserted look and in another day there will not be a soul there. We are all leaving tonight or tomorrow morning. I do not think I shall come back for a fortnight, as I do not look forward to living all alone here.

"You were perfectly right.* Bibi's death was welcome to her, and it was in the fitness of things. She had done her life's job and there was nothing to find her further. For some years past, she had quietly taken to *Sannyas*. Indeed, since her girlhood, when she became a widow, she had lived a hard life. Neither mother nor Bibi could have long survived the other."

Even at the time of Pandit Motilal's death, I saw in him the same peaceful and sturdy resignation and the determination to live the life in a spirit of greater dedication. (*M.D.*)

—*Harijan* : February 5, 1938.

70. ECONOMY OF ABUNDANCE

American Visitor : Pandit Jawaharlal seems to think in terms of the economy of abundance.

Gandhiji : I know. But what is abundance? Not the capacity to destroy millions of tons of wheat, as you do in America?

American Visitor : Yes, that's the nemesis of Capitalism. They do not destroy now, but they are being paid for *NOT* producing wheat. People indulged in the pastime of throwing eggs at one another, because the prices of the eggs had gone down.

Gandhiji : That is what we do not want. If by abundance you mean everyone having plenty to eat and drink and to clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated, I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuff in my belly than I can digest, and more things than I can ever usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India.

American Visitor : But Pandit Jawaharlal says in his Autobiography you worship *Dauidranarayana* and extol poverty for its own sake.

Gandhiji : I know.

—*Harijan* : February 12, 1938.

*This refers to Gandhiji's telegram to Jawaharlal in which he said : "Death has proved a welcome friend to Bibi who was inseparable from Mother."

71. JAWAHARLAL AND NON-VIOLENCE

No one could have failed to notice the extraordinary triumph of Pandit Jawaharlal's tour in Europe, of the numerous meetings he is addressing and the innumerable private conversations he is having with people of all schools of thought and of all political complexions. Wherever he has gone, he has made everyone look up to him as the accredited representative of India pledged to win Complete Independence, and to win that Independence not by violence but by non-violence. He has had hostile listeners and hecklers too, but his ready wit and manly bearing have silenced them all. One incident, out of the numerous he must have had at these meetings, is worth notice. Most of our youths run away with the idea that Pandit Jawaharlal is opposed to non-violence; and as soon as he mentioned the Congress policy of non-violence at the Left Book Club meeting in Queen's Hall in London, one of the Indian youths shouted 'Shame', expecting perhaps that it would find a responsive echo in the distinguished speaker's mind. But fancy his discomfiture when Pandit Jawaharlal came down upon him and said: "It astounds me that anybody should imagine peaceful methods a shameful thing. The non-violent policy has not been passive but dynamic. It has brought tremendous pressure to bear on the Government and has given the Indian people self-reliance, faith and common action." (*M.D.*)

—*Harijan* : August 13, 1938.

72. FEDERATION

A well-known correspondent tells me that in London the common talk is that Gandhi counts for everything, and it does not matter what the Congress or Congressmen may say, or do. The critics embellish the statement by saying that there is a wide difference of opinion between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself, and that while he will not touch Federation with

a pair of tongs, I am prepared to submit to it if some trifles are conceded. I have paraphrased in my own words a longish letter, giving details which I may not share with the readers at least at the present juncture.

Evidently, my critics know more of me than I seem to know myself. For instance, I know how little I count among Congressmen; the critics know how much I count among them. Whatever influence I still possess among Congressmen, is solely due to my constant appeal to reason and never to authority. But if I had the influence the critics attribute to me, I make bold to say that India would have gained her independence long ago and there would be no repression that is going on unchecked in some of the States. I know the art of winning independence and stopping the frightfulness of which one reads in the papers. If I had my way with the Congressmen, there would be no corruption, no untruth and no violence amongst them. If I had my way with them, they would all be enthusiastic *Khaddarites* and there would be no surplus *Khadi* in the A.I.S.A. *Bhandars*.

But I am going astray. I had intended to write about Federation. In the first place, in all my talks, which have been very few, I have made it clear that I represent nobody and that I have not even aired my views to any Congressman. I have also made it clear that what the Congress says and does is of consequence, whatever I may say is of no value unless it represents the Congress view. As a matter of fact, too, I have said that the Congress will never have Federation forced upon it, and that there was no hope of peace in India till there was independence in virtue of a constitution framed by a duly convened Constituent Assembly. I have also made it clear that so far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and I are concerned, though we may talk in different language, we are one in most things that matter to India. On the question of Federation, there never has been any difference of opinion between us. And I have made a rule for myself that so far as the Congress is concerned, if there is an unbridgeable gulf between him and me, his view should prevail. And this for the very good reason that I am not in the Congress and he is in the centre of it, and very much in touch with everything relating to the Congress.

—*Harijan* : October 1, 1938.

73. MY FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE WITH SOCIALISTS

Q. Have you differences with Socialists and Pandit Jawaharlal?

A. There are differences between Jawaharlal and the other Socialist friends. My fundamental difference with Socialists is well-known. I believe in the conversion of human nature and in striving for it. They do not believe in this. But let me tell you that we are coming nearer one another. Either they are being drawn to me, or I am being drawn to them. As for Jawaharlal, we know that neither of us can do without the other, for there is a heart-union between us which no intellectual differences can break.

—*Harijan* : May 27, 1939.

74. THE WAR RESOLUTION

On the War resolution, I had a conclusive defeat. I was invited to draft a resolution, and so was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was proud of my draft, but my pride went before destruction. I saw that I could not carry my resolution, unless I argued and pressed for it. But I had no such desire. We then listened to Jawaharlal's. And I at once admitted that it represented more truly than mine the country's opinion, and even the Working Committee's as a whole. Mine was based upon out and out non-violence. If the Congress heartily believed in non-violence in its fullness even as a policy, this was its testing time. But Congressmen, barring individual exceptions, do not believe in such non-violence. Those who do, believe that it is the right thing only for a fight against the Government for wresting power. But the Congress has no non-violent message for the world. I would fain believe that the Congress had such message. The conclusion to both the resolutions need not have been radically different. But the motive power being different, the same conclusion would bear a different meaning in a different setting. In the face of the violence going on in India itself, and in the face of

the fact that Congress Governments have been obliged to fall back upon military and police assistance, a declaration to the world on non-violence would have seemed a mockery. It would have carried no weight in India or with the world. Yet, to be true to myself, I could not draft any other resolution than I did.

—*Harijan* : August 26, 1939.

75. CONGRESS AND THE PRINCES

I have no desire to eliminate the Princes. Friends have complained to me that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has, however, made such a statement although the Congress has enunciated no such policy. I have not had the opportunity of asking him about the alleged remark. But assuming that he did make the statement, it can only mean that some Princes are so acting as to bring about their own elimination. It is wrong to judge him by newspaper reports. His considered opinion is to be gathered from his statement on behalf of the Standing Committee of the All-India States People's Conference. Therein he has even warned people against hasty action. He is much too loyal a Congressman to contemplate any action in advance of known Congress policy. Therefore, the fear and hatred of the Congress on the part of some Princes are misplaced, and are calculated to injure rather than help them.

—*Harijan* : September 16, 1939.

76. WORKING COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT

The Working Committee's statement on the world crisis took four days before it received final shape. Every member expressed his opinion freely on the draft that was, at the Committee's invitation, prepared by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was sorry to find myself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally. This could only be done on a purely non-violent basis. But the Committee had a tremendous responsibility to discharge. It could not take the purely non-

violent attitude. It felt that the nation had not imbibed the non-violent spirit requisite for the possession of the strength which disdains to take advantage of the difficulty of the opponent. But in stating the reasons for its conclusion, the Committee desired to show the greatest consideration for the English.

The author of the statement is an artist. Though he cannot be surpassed in his implacable opposition to Imperialism in any shape or form, he is a friend of the English people. Indeed, he is more English than Indian in his thoughts and make up. He is often more at home with Englishmen than with his own countrymen. And he is a humanitarian in the sense that he reacts to every wrong, no matter where perpetrated. Though, therefore, he is an ardent nationalist, his nationalism is enriched by his fine internationalism. Hence, the statement is a manifesto addressed not only to his own countrymen, not only to the British Government and the British people, but it is addressed also to the nations of the world, including those that are exploited like India. He has compelled India, through the Working Committee, to think not merely of her own freedom, but of the freedom of all the exploited nations of the world.

The same time that the Committee passed the statement, it appointed a Board of his choice with himself as Chairman to deal with the situation as it may develop from time to time.

I hope that the statement will receive the unanimous support of all the parties among Congressmen. The strongest among them will not find any lack of strength in it. And at this supreme hour in the history of the nation, the Congress should believe that there will be no lack of strength in action, if action becomes necessary. It will be a pity if Congressmen engage in petty squabbles and party strife. If anything big or worthy is to come out of the Committee's action, the undivided and unquestioned loyalty of every Congressman is absolutely necessary. I hope, too, that all other political parties and all communities will join the Committee's demand for a clear declaration of their policy from the British Government, with such corresponding action as is possible amidst martial conditions. Recognition of India, and for that matter

of all those who are under the British Crown, as free and independent nations seems to me to be the natural corollary of British professions about democracy. If the War means anything less, the co-operation of dependent nations can never be honestly voluntary, unless it were based on non-violence.

All that is required is a mental revolution on the part of British statesmen. To put it still more plainly, all that is required is honest action to implement the declaration of faith in democracy made on the eve of the War, and still being repeated from British platforms. Will Great Britain have an unwilling India dragged into the War, or a willing ally co-operating with her in the prosecution of a defence of true democracy? The Congress support will mean the greatest moral asset in favour of England and France. For, the Congress has no soldiers to offer. The Congress fights not with violent but with non-violent means, however imperfect, however crude the non-violence may be.

—*Harijan* : September 23, 1939.

77. NO DIVIDED COUNSELS

Segaon, Wardha,

October 10, 1939.

My dear Jawaharlal,

I could see that though your affection and regard for me remain undiminished, differences in outlook between us are becoming most marked. Perhaps, this is the most critical period in our history. I hold very strong views on the most important questions which occupy our attention. I know you, too, hold strong views on them but different from mine. Your mode of expression is different from mine. I am not sure that I carry the other members with me in the views that I hold very strongly. I cannot move about. I cannot come in direct touch with the masses, not even with the Congress workers. So I feel that I must not lead, if I cannot carry you all with me. There should be no divided counsels among the members of the Working Committee. I feel that you should take full charge and lead the country, leaving me free

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to voice my own opinion. But if you all thought that I should observe complete silence, I should, I hope, find no difficulty in complying. If you think it worthwhile, you should come and discuss the whole thing.

Love,
BAPU.

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 363.

78. FUTILITY OF ARMAMENTS

Jawaharlal Nehru, who has a right to speak for the Congress, has said in stately language that the peace must mean freedom for those who are held in bondage by the Imperialist Powers of the world. I have every hope that the Congress will also be able to show the world that the power that armaments give to defend right is nothing compared to the power that non-violence gives to do the same thing and that, too, with better show of reason. Armaments can show no reason, they can make only a pretence of it.

—*Harijan* : October 14, 1939.

79. VIVISECTION OF INDIA

If we Hindus, Muslims and others are to evolve democracy, we shall do so only by the whole nation speaking its mind through its representatives elected under the broadest franchise possible, and that either through British goodwill or in the teeth of its opposition. The pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government give no promise of British goodwill. British Imperialism is still vigorous and, in spite of Sir Samuel Hoare's declaration to the contrary, it will die hard. The proposal to vivisection India is a contribution to imperialistic growth. For, vivisection can only be made by the aid of the British bayonet or through a deadly civil war. I hope the Congress will be party to neither game. British refusal to make the required declaration of Britain's war aims about India has perhaps come as a blessing in

disguise. It removes the Congress out of the way to enable the Muslim League to make its choice, unfettered by the Congress administration in eight Provinces, as to whether it will keep the British yoke by vivisectioning India or whether it will fight for the independence of an undivided India. I hope that the League does not want to vivisection India. Presently, the talks between Janab Jinnah Saheb and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will be resumed. Let us hope that they will result in producing a basis for a lasting solution of the communal tangle.

--*Harijan* : November 11, 1939.

80. KAMALA NEHRU MEMORIAL

On the 19th instant, I had the privilege of laying the foundation stone of the Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital in Allahabad before a large gathering. This hospital will be not only a fitting remembrance of the memory of a true devotee of her country and a woman of great spiritual beauty, it will be a redemption of the promise made to her by me that I would do what lay in my power to see that the work for which she had made herself responsible was carried on even after her death. She was going to Europe in search of health. The visit proved to be a search of death. As she was going she had invited me, if I could, either join her for a brief talk during part of her journey to Bombay or to see her in Bombay. I went to Bombay. During the time that I was able to give her she asked me, if she died in Europe, to try to see that the hospital which Jawaharlal had commenced in *Swaraj Bhavan* and which she had laboured to keep alive, was put on a permanent footing. I told her I would do what I could. That promise was partly the foundation for the appeal, to which I had become party, for funds for the Memorial. Owing to circumstances beyond my control, I was not able to take much active part in collecting the funds. The appeal was made for five lacs and only half the amount has come in. At the ceremony of foundation laying, I made an appeal to the large audience composed of the wealthy as also the poor to share the burden of making up the deficit. By judicious

organization, it ought to be easy to make the collection for a cause so worthy and for a memory so sacred. Able doctors of all-India reputation like Jivraj Mehta and Bidhan Chandra Roy are among the trustees. They have made themselves responsible for the proper construction, organization and management of the hospital. I hope that not only will the deficit be soon made up, but the doctors will have no difficulty in securing a suitable staff for the efficient management of the hospital.

—*Harijan* : November 25, 1939.

81. THE ONLY WAY

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has compelled me to study, among other things, the implications of a Constituent Assembly. When he first introduced it in the Congress resolutions, I reconciled myself to it because of my belief in his superior knowledge of the technicalities of democracy. But I was not free from scepticism. Hard facts have, however, made me a convert and, for that reason perhaps, more enthusiastic than Jawaharlal himself. For I seem to see in it a remedy, which Jawaharlal may not, for our communal and other distempers, besides being a vehicle for mass political and other education.

The more criticism I see of the scheme, the more enamoured I become of it. It will be the surest index to the popular feeling. It will bring out the best and the worst in us. Illiteracy does not worry me. I would plump for unadulterated adult franchise for both men and women, *i.e.*, I would put them all on the register of voters. It is open to them not to exercise it if they do not wish to. I would give separate vote to the Muslims; but, without giving separate vote, I would, though reluctantly, give reservation, if required, to every real minority according to its numerical strength.

Thus, the Constituent Assembly provides the easiest method of arriving at a just solution of the communal problem. Today, we are unable to say with mathematical precision who represents whom. Though the Congress is admittedly the oldest representative organization on the widest scale, it is open

to political and semi-political organizations to question, as they do question, its overwhelmingly representative character. The Muslim League is undoubtedly the largest organization representing Muslims, but several Muslim bodies—by no means all insignificant—deny its claim to represent them. But the Constituent Assembly will represent all communities in their exact proportion. Except it, there is no other way of doing full justice to rival claims. Without it, there can be no finality to communal and other claims.

Again, the Constituent Assembly alone can produce a constitution indigenous to the country and truly and fully representing the will of the people. Undoubtedly, such a constitution will not be ideal, but it will be real, however imperfect it may be in the estimation of the theorists or legal luminaries. Self-government to be self-government has merely to reflect the will of the people who are to govern themselves. If they are not prepared for it, they will make a hash of it. I can conceive the possibility of a people fitting themselves for right government through a series of wrong experiments, but I cannot conceive a people governing themselves rightly through a government imposed from without, even as the fabled jackdaw could not walk like a peacock with feathers borrowed from his elegant companion. A diseased person has a prospect of getting well by personal effort. He cannot borrow health from others.

The risks of the experiment are admitted. There is likely to be impersonation. Unscrupulous persons will mislead the illiterate masses into voting for wrong men and women. These risks have to be run, if we are to evolve something true and big. The Constituent Assembly, if it comes into being—as I hope it will—as a result of an honourable settlement between us and the British people, the combined wit of the best men of the two nations will produce an Assembly that will reflect fairly truly the best mind of India. Therefore, the success of the experiment, at the present stage of India's history, depends upon the intention of the British statesmen to part with power without engaging India in a deadly unorganized rebellion. For, I know that India has become impatient. I am painfully conscious of the fact that India is not yet ready for non-violent civil disobedience on a mass scale. If, there-

fore, I cannot persuade the Congress to await the time when non-violent action is possible, I have no desire to live to see a dog-fight between the two communities. I know for certain that, if I cannot discover a method of non-violent action or inaction to the satisfaction of the Congress and there is no communal adjustment, nothing on earth can prevent an outbreak of violence resulting for the time being in anarchy and red ruin. I hold that it is the duty of all communities and Englishmen to prevent such a catastrophe.

Look at the question from any standpoint you like, it will be found that the way to democratic *Swaraj* lies only through a properly constituted Assembly, call it by whatever name you like. All resources must, therefore, be exhausted to reach the Constituent Assembly before direct action is thought of. A stage may be reached when direct action may become the necessary prelude to the Constituent Assembly. That stage is not yet.

—*Harijan* : November 25, 1939.

82. BAFFLING SITUATION

Jawaharlal, born democrat as he is, had arranged for a free talk between the Executive Council of the U.P.C.C. and me. We had three such talks. I had expected that the talks would result in a parting of the ways. Among the Congressmen whom I was facing, there were some who had laughed at the *Charkha* and non-violence. But, to my utter astonishment, I found them reconciled to both. It is a baffling situation both for Congressmen and me.

I do not know whether I am wise in bearing the heavy responsibility of leading Congressmen, who only the other day had no faith in me. Are they not paying too great a price for my leadership in a battle? If they render obedience without faith, is it good for them or me? Can I lead them to success? If I was not good enough in peace, how can I be good in war? There was no peace. The Congress is at war with Great Britain till Independence is won. War had never ceased; only civil disobedience had been suspended for better and greater preparation. Congressmen, who did not obey

instructions during the preparatory period, were surely not fit soldiers on active duty. And yet I could not distrust the responsible men who faced me in Allahabad. What is true of them is true of the other Congressmen in the other Provinces. And so I am shouldering the burden.

—*Harijan* : December 2, 1939.

83. NON-VIOLENCE AND CONGRESSMEN

Let the Congressmen who believe that the Congress should adhere to non-violence in dealing with internal disorders or external aggression, express it in their daily conduct. Non-violence of the strong cannot be a mere policy. It must be a creed, or a passion, if 'creed' is objected to. A man with a passion expresses it in every little act of his. Therefore, he who is possessed by non-violence, will express it in the family circle, in his dealings with neighbours, in his business, in Congress meetings, in public meetings, and in his dealings with opponents. It is because it has not expressed itself in this way among Congressmen that the members of the Working Committee rightly concluded that Congressmen were not ready for non-violent treatment of internal disorders or external aggression. Embarrassment caused by non-violent action would move established authority to yield to popular will. But such action has obviously no play in the face of disorders. We have to court death without retaliation and with no malice or anger towards those who bring about disorder. It is easy enough to see that non-violence required here is of a wholly different type from what the Congress has known hitherto. But it is the only non-violence that is true and that can save the world from self-destruction. This is certainly sooner or later, sooner rather than later, if India cannot deliver the message of pure non-violence to world which wants to be saved from the curse of wars and does not know how to find the deliverance.

P.S. After the foregoing was written and typed, I saw Jawaharlal's statement. His love for and confidence in me peep out of every sentence referring to me. The foregoing

does not need any amendment. It is better for the reader to have both the independent reactions. Good must come out of this separation.

—*Harijan* : June 29, 1940.

84. PROGRESS TOWARDS AHIMSA

The correspondent doubts in substance the universal application of *Ahimsa*, and asserts that society has made little progress towards it. Teachers like Buddha arose and made some effort with some little success perhaps in their life-time, but society is just where it was in spite of them. *Ahimsa* may be good enough to be the duty of an individual; for society it is good for nothing, and India, too, will have to take to violence for her freedom. .

The argument is, I think, fundamentally wrong. The last statement is incorrect, inasmuch as the Congress has adhered to non-violence as the means for the attainment of *Swaraj*. It has indeed gone a step further. The question having been raised as to whether non-violence continues to be the weapon against all internal disturbances, the A.-I.C.C. clearly gave the answer in the affirmative. It is only for protection against outside aggression that the Congress has maintained that it would be necessary to have an army. And then even on this matter, there was a considerable body of the members of the A.-I.C.C. who voted against the resolution. . This dissent has got to be reckoned with when the question voted upon is one of principle. The Congress policy must always be decided by a majority vote, but it does not cancel the minority vote. It stands. Where there is no principle involved and there is a programme to be carried out, the minority has got to follow the majority. But where there is a principle involved, the dissent stands, and it is bound to express itself in practice when the occasion arises. That means that *Ahimsa* for all occasions and all purposes has been recognized by society, however small it may be, and that *Ahimsa*, as a remedy to be used by society, has made fair strides. Whether it will make further strides or no, is a different matter. The Working Committee's resolu-

tion, therefore, fails to lend any support to the correspondent's doubts. On the contrary, it should, in a certain degree, dispel them.

Now for the argument that I am but a rare individual, and that what little society has done in the matter of *Ahimsa* is due to my influence, and that it is sure to disappear with me. This is not right. The Congress has a number of leaders who can think for themselves. The Maulana is a great thinker of keen intellect and vast reading. Few can equal him in his Arabic and Persian scholarship. Experience has taught him that *Ahimsa* alone can make India free. It was he who insisted on the resolution accepting *Ahimsa* as a weapon against internal disturbances. Pandit Jawaharlal is not a man to stand in awe of anyone. His study of history and contemporary events is second to none. It is after mature thought that he has accepted *Ahimsa* as a means for the attainment of *Swaraj*. It is true that he has said that he would not hesitate to accept *Swaraj* if non-violence failed, and it could be won by means of violence. But that is not relevant to the present issue. There are not a few other big names in the Congress who believe in *Ahimsa* as the only weapon at least for the attainment of *Swaraj*. To think that all of them will give up the way of *Ahimsa* as soon as I am gone, is to insult them and to insult human nature. We must believe that everyone can think for himself. Mutual respect, to that extent, is essential for progress. By crediting our companions with independent judgment we strengthen them and make it easy for them to be independent-minded, even if they are proved to be weak.

—*Harijan* : August 11, 1940.

85. DEFINITION OF SWARAJ

I have yet to come across a complete definition of *Swaraj*. I do not think I have been able to give it myself. I do not think even Jawaharlal has ever given it. It is possible that someone from amongst you may be able to give it, as it has often happened that others have defined for me

things I have been labouring for. If anyone can do so, I shall gladly make him my *guru*.

—*Harijan* : September 22, 1940.

86. EVILS INHERENT IN INDUSTRIALISM

My views on national planning differ from the prevailing ones. I do not want it along industrial lines. I want to prevent our villages from catching the infection of industrialization. American exploitation has added neither to the moral height of the exploited countries, nor of the exploiting country. On the contrary, it has impeded their march towards spiritual progress, and deadened America's real spirit of philanthropy. A phenomenon like the one that America witnessed cannot happen in India. I mean the destruction of tons of sugar and other agricultural products. You might have supplied other countries the sugar and the wheat or fed America's own unemployed.

"But", said the American correspondent, laughing, "you could not have taken our pigs"!

I know. But all do not think like me. Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of Capitalism. My own view is that the evils are inherent in industrialism, and no amount of socialization can eradicate them.

—*Harijan* : September 29, 1940.

87. WHEN VIRTUE BECOMES VICE

I have made repeated statements that I would not be guilty of embarrassing the British people or the British Government when their very existence hung in the balance, that I would not be true to my *Satyagraha*, would not be true to non-violence, would not be true to the truth which I hold dear if I did so, and therefore could not do so. That very man now stands before you to shoulder the burden of *Satyagraha*. Why? There comes a time when a man in his

weakness mistakes vice for virtue; and virtue itself, when taken away from its context and from the purpose for which it was dedicated, becomes vice. I felt that, if I did not go to the assistance of the Congress and take the helm even if it be in fear and trembling, I would be untrue to myself.

I feel that in taking the step that we are doing, we are rendering a great service not only to the Congress but to the whole of India. And we are rendering a service not only to the whole of India. History will record—and Englishmen will be able to grasp this statement some day—that we rendered help to the English nation, and they will find that we were true to our salt and had the same bravery and fearlessness of which the Englishman is proud and for which he is renowned. I, who claim to be a fast friend of the English people, will be guilty of unfriendly conduct if, under a false sense of modesty, or because people may think otherwise about me, or because Englishmen themselves will be angry with me, I do not issue a warning that the virtue of self-restraint now becomes vice, because it will kill the Congress organization, and it will kill the very spirit which is exercising this restraint.

The language of this resolution is in the main mine. It appealed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I used to be the Congress draftsman. Now, he has taken my place. He saw it was inevitable, if we were to be true to non-violent resistance to the extent to which we wanted to go. The Working Committee has accepted this phraseology deliberately, well knowing its implications. The result is this: If we can get a declaration from the British Government that the Congress can carry on anti-war propaganda, and preach non-co-operation with the Government in their war effort, we will not have civil disobedience.

I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find St. Paul's Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kashi Vishvanath temple and the Juma Masjid were damaged. I would like to defend both the Kashi Vishvanath temple or the Juma Masjid and even St. Paul's with my life, but would not take a single life for their defence. That is my fundamental difference with the British people. My sympathy is there with them, nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on

the part of Englishmen, Congressmen, or others whom my voice reaches, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English or the Italians are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into water-tight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, 'India should be all in all, let the whole world perish.' That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have goodwill towards the whole of the human family, and not merely for the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the Universe?

—*Harijan* : September 29, 1940.

88. NO TURNING BACK

Wardha,

October 24, 1940.

Dear Jawaharlal,

I was glad to have your wire. If my statement has been allowed, you will have seen it before this.

If you are ready, you may now ceremonially declare your civil disobedience. I would suggest your choosing a village for your audience. I do not suppose they will allow you to repeat your speech. They were not ready with their plans so far as Vinoba was concerned. But should they let you free, I suggest your following the plan laid down for Vinoba. But if you feel otherwise, you will follow your own course. Only, I would like you to give me your programme. You will fix your own date so as to leave me time for announcing

the date and place. It may be that they won't let you even fulfil your very first programme. I am prepared for every such step on the part of the Government. Whilst I would make use of every legitimate method seeking publicity for our programme, my reliance is on regulated thought producing its own effect. If this is hard for you to believe, I would ask you to suspend judgment and watch results. I know you will yourself be patient and ask our people on your side to do likewise. I know what strain you are bearing in giving me your loyalty. I prize it beyond measure. I hope it will be found to have been well-placed, for it is 'do or die'. There is no turning. I must be allowed to go my way in demonstrating the power of non-violence when it is unadulterated.

Maulana Saheb' phoned saying I should choose another man for the second *Satyagraha*. I told him I could not do so if you consented to come in.

I would like your reaction to the step I have taken regarding *Harijan*.

Love,
BAPU.

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 364.

89. ON BARDOLI RESOLUTION

Introducing the 'Bardoli Resolution in the A.-I.C.C. meeting at Wardha on Jan. 15, 1942, Gandhiji said :

I have been taunted as a *Bania*. I regard that as a certificate of merit. The article in my possession is an invaluable pearl. It has to be weighed in the proper scales, and those who can pay the price for it can have it. It cannot be bartered away even for Independence.

Non-violence has brought us near to *Swaraj*, as never before. We dare not exchange it even for *Swaraj*. For, *Swaraj* thus got will be no true *Swaraj*. The question is *not* what we will do after *Swaraj*. It is whether, under given conditions, we can give up non-violence to win *Swaraj*. Again, do you expect to win real Independence by abandoning non-violence?

Independence, for me, means the Independence of the humblest and poorest amongst us. It cannot be obtained by joining the War. For the Congress to join any war before the attainment of Complete Independence, is to undo the work of the past twenty years.

And yet, why is it that I stand before you to plead with you to accept the Resolution, and not even to divide the house? The reason is that the Resolution reflects the Congress mind. It undoubtedly is a step backward. We have not a clean slate to write on. Our elders have taken a step which has produced world-wide reactions. To alter the Resolution out of shape is to ignore these. It would be unwise to change the policy adopted by the Working Committee. The world had a right to think that the Working Committee's policy would be endorsed by you. At one time, I had thought of dividing the A.-I.C.C., but I saw that it would be a mistake. It would be almost violence. Non-violence does not act in the ordinary way.

Sometimes, a step back is a prelude to a step forward. It is highly likely that our step will be of that character.

The Resolution is a mirror in which all groups can see themselves. The original was Jawaharlalji's draft, but it was referred to a sub-committee at whose hands it has undergone material changes. The original had left no room for Rajaji to work. The sub-committee opened a tiny window for him to squeeze in. Jawaharlalji's opposition to participation in the war effort is almost as strong as mine, though his reasons are different. Rajaji would participate, if certain conditions acceptable to the Congress were fulfilled. The non-violent non-cooperators like Rajendra Babu have certainly a place, for until the remote event takes place, non-violence rules supreme.

Do not please go away with the idea that there is a rift in the Congress lute. The Working Committee has worked like members of a happy family. Somebody suggested that Pandit Jawaharlal and I were estranged. It will require much more than differences of opinion to estrange us. We have had differences from the moment we became co-workers, and yet I have said for some years and say now that not Rajaji but Jawaharlal will be my successor. He says he does not understand my language, and that he speaks a language foreign to me. This may or may not be true. But language is no bar

to a union of hearts. And I know this that when I am gone, he will speak my language.*

Let there be no lack of understanding or zeal among Congressmen. Neither Jawaharlal nor Rajaji will let you be idle. I certainly will not. Lastly, let those who think the constructive programme is insipid know that there is nothing in the Working Committee's resolution to prevent a Congressman at his own risk from leading civil disobedience—individual or mass. If he succeeds, he will win nothing but praise from all. But let me warn enthusiasts that they will not handle the weapon with any success. They will only damage themselves and the cause by any hasty or ignorant action. And let me say as your expert that those who regard the constructive programme as insipid, do not know what non-violence is and how it works.

The suspension of *Satyagraha* has connection only with the present condition of the country, and I want every single man who thinks with me to remain outside and do work rather than go to jail and read the *Quran* and the *Gita* and lead an easy life there. I won't let them lead an easy life. Jawaharlal will ask for diaries from thousands of men. He is not going to sleep. Therefore, if you will go away with the real message to the country, do not criticize this Resolution. Nobody is rendered incapable of giving the fullest possible service; in fact, he is made capable of the fullest growth, by reason of this Resolution. Civil disobedience remains under my control, and the reason for its suspension is wholly extraneous to my retirement from office. Every one of you has to give a good account of yourself. If all will pull your full weight in the fulfilment of the constructive programme, you will find a different India in six months' time.

—*Harijan* : January 25, 1942.

**My Legal Heir* : "The idea that there has been a split or quarrel in the Working Committee is absolutely wrong. The difference between me and Jawaharlal Nehru is not a secret, but this difference cannot separate us. The same is true about Sardar Patel, Rajaji and others. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is my legal heir. I am sure when I pass away, he will take up all the work I do. He is a brave and courageous man. Often he quarrels with me; but when I am no more, he will know how to carry on the work."

—*The Hindustan Times* : January 17, 1942.

90. FUTURE PROGRAMME

Q. We should like to have a glimpse of the next six months or a year as you picture it to yourself. You have often said that this is a fight to the finish, your last fight which will not end until the goal is won. What are likely to be the future developments as you can visualize them?

A. It is a good question, and also a difficult question. Not that I am not clear, but because it takes us into the realm of speculation. I let things and happenings react on me, though I confess I do not follow everything as Jawaharlal with his study of foreign affairs can.

Jawaharlal is convinced that the British Empire is finished. We all wish that it may be finished, but I do not think it is finished. We know that the Britishers are tough fighters, we know that what the Empire—especially India—means to every home in Britain, and, therefore, they will never consent to be 'Little Englanders'. Mr. Churchill has said that they are not 'sugar candies', and that they can meet rough with rough. Therefore, it will be long before the Empire is finished. There is no doubt, however, that they are nearing the end, and what Jawaharlal has said is very true that, if we could do nothing to prevent the war, we certainly will do much to prevent a peace in which we have no voice. That is what every Congressman has to bear in mind. We have, therefore, to be up and doing. If we sit with folded hands, we may have a peace which we do not desire.

I adhere to the statement that it is my final fight, but we have had to alter our programme because of the latest developments, because War has come to our door. The suspension had nothing to do with my retirement from the official leadership of the Congress. Even if it had continued, how could I today ask Jawaharlal to march back to jail? Of course he will be in jail, if he is prevented from doing the work we have chalked out. But things have happened so rapidly that we had not the slightest idea of what was coming. How then can I talk of a year or even six months ahead? That we are marching swiftly towards Independence I have no doubt. There

is no doubt about the programme ahead of us. No Congressman should rest content with just paying his four anna fee. He has to be active all the twenty-four hours. Even the one concrete programme of production of cloth is sufficient to occupy all our energies. There are 400 students in the Benaras Hindu University. Will they spin an hour every day? I am talking of spinning because it is a thing nearest my heart, but there are a hundred and one other things. Have the villagers enough food to eat? Have they enough to cover themselves in this bitter cold? These are the questions that occur to me again and again. On our capacity to feed the starving and clothe the naked and generally to serve the masses in the time of their need, will depend our capacity to influence the peace whenever it comes. What I have said applies to all parties. Whoever serves the purpose best will survive and have an effective voice.

Q. You think they cannot have a treaty just as they like?

A. I do. The days of secret treaties are gone, I hope. If we behave ourselves, we can have a decisive voice at least so far as we are concerned. But Jawaharlal can explain these things better. I am no student of history or even of contemporary events in the world.

—*Harijan* : February 8, 1942.

91. INDIRA NEHRU'S ENGAGEMENT

I have received several angry and abusive letters and some professing to reason about Indira's engagement with Firoz Gandhi. Not a single correspondent has anything against Firoz Gandhi as a man. His only crime in their estimation is that he happens to be a Parsi. I have been, and I am still, as strong an opponent of either party changing religion for the sake of marriage. Religion is not a garment to be cast off at will. In the present case, there is no question of change of religion. Firoz Gandhi has been for years an inmate of the Nehru family. He nursed Kamala Nehru in her sickness. He was like a son to her. During Indira's illness in Europe, he was of great help to her. A natural intimacy grew up between them. The friendship has been perfectly honourable. It has ripened into mutual attraction. But

neither party would think of marrying without the consent and blessing of Jawaharlal Nehru. This was given only after he was satisfied that the attraction had a solid basis. The public know my connection with the Nehrus. I had also talks with both the parties. It would have been cruelty to refuse consent to this engagement. As time advances, such unions are bound to multiply with benefit to society. At present, we have not even reached the stage of mutual toleration; but as toleration grows into mutual respect for religions, such unions will be welcomed. No religion, which is narrow and which cannot satisfy the test of reason, will survive the coming reconstruction of society in which the values will have changed and character, not possession of wealth, title or birth, will be the sole test of merit. The Hinduism of my conception is no narrow creed. It is a grand evolutionary process as ancient as time, and embraces the teachings of Zoroaster, Moses, Christ, Mohammed, Nanak and other prophets that I could name. It is thus defined :

विद्वद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिर्नित्यमद्वेषरागिभिः ।

हृदयेनाभ्यनुज्ञातो यो धर्मस्तं निबोधत ॥

[Know that to be (true) religion which the wise and the good and those who are ever free from passion and hate follow and which appeals to the heart.]

If it is not that, it will perish. My correspondents will pardon me for not acknowledging their letters. I invite them to shed their wrath and bless the forthcoming marriage. Their letters betray ignorance, intolerance and prejudice—a species of untouchability, dangerous because not easily to be so classified.

—*Harijan* : March 8, 1942.

92. SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND SELF-RELIANCE

Self-sufficiency is a big word. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has adopted that and self-reliance as slogans in his U.P. speeches. They should prove catching at this juncture. Villages will be swept away if they are not self-sufficient as to their primary wants, and self-reliant as to their protection against internal disruption by dissensions and disease and

external danger from thieves and dacoits. Self-sufficiency, therefore, means all the cotton processes and growing of seasonal food crops and fodder for cattle. Unless this is done, there will be starvation. And self-reliance means corporate organization, ensuring adjustment of internal differences through arbitration by the wise men of villages, and cleanliness by corporate attention to sanitation and common diseases. No mere individual effort is going to suffice. And above all, villagers must be taught to feel their own strength by combined effort to make their villages proof against thieves and dacoits. This is best done by corporate non-violence. But if the way to non-violence does not seem clear to workers, they will not hesitate to organize corporate defence through violence. I am not having in mind Congressmen who have adopted non-violence as their final creed and so have no choice in the matter.

—*Harijan* : April 5, 1942.

93. JAWAHARLAL—MY HEIR

Q. You declared the other day at Wardha that Jawaharlal Nehru was your 'legal heir'. How do you like the idea of your legal heir advocating guerilla warfare against the Japanese? What will happen to your *Ahimsa* when Jawaharlal openly advocates violence and Rajaji wants arms and military training for the whole nation?

A. As you have put it, the situation does appear awful. But it really is not so awful as it appears to you. In the first instance, 'legal heir' is not my phrase. I had spoken in Hindi. I had said that he was not my 'legal heir', but that he was virtually my heir. That means that he will take my place when I am gone. He has never accepted my method in its entirety. He has frankly criticized it, and yet he has faithfully carried out the Congress policy largely influenced, when it was not solely directed, by me. Those, like Sardar Vallabhbhai, who have followed me without question cannot be called heirs. And everybody admits that Jawaharlal has the drive that no one else has in the same measure. And have I not said also that when I am gone, he will shed the difference he often declares he has with me?

I am sorry he has developed a fancy for guerilla warfare. But I have no doubt that it will be a nine days' wonder. It will take no effect. It is foreign to the Indian soil. Twenty-two years' incessant preaching and practice of non-violence, however imperfect it has been, could not be suddenly obliterated by the mere wish of Jawaharlal and Rajaji, powerful though their influence is. I am, therefore, not perturbed by the 'apostacy' either of Jawaharlal or Rajaji. They will return to non-violence with renewed zest, strengthened by the failure of their effort. Neither goes to violence for his belief in it. They do so because they think probably that India must have a course of violence before coming to non-violence. No one can say beyond doubt how events will shape themselves. It may be that their instinct is correct and mine, backed though it is by experience, is not. I know this, however, that my line is cut out for me. Even though I may be alone in my faith, I must follow it unfalteringly, believing that the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on any large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences.

Non-violent Non-co-operation is the most effective substitute for every kind of violent warfare. If the whole nation takes to non-violent action, it can be wholly successful. It could not be quite so against the British, because their roots have gone deep into the soil. The Japanese have not even got a foothold. I hope that the forthcoming A.-I.C.C. will revert to the non-violent method and give the clearest possible instructions about Non-violent Non-co-operation. To aid the British effort in the violent way, without any official connection and after the failure of the recent negotiations, appears to me to court national disgrace.

—*Harijan* : April 26, 1942.

94. MY CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM

I have never believed in secrecy, nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task

is to educate the public mind in India and the world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so, and when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something.

That something may be very big, if the Congress and the people are with me. The British authority will have full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I endorse it. Remember, I have yet to see the Congress President. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say, by the way, they were wholly of a friendly nature, and we have come nearer each other even with the unfinished talk* yesterday. Naturally, I want to carry the whole Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me, for my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation.

—*The Hindustan Times* : May 31, 1942.

* Referring to this talk and the subsequent one that Pandit Jawaharlal had with Gandhiji, Panditji in a Press interview at Bombay on June 17, 1942, said :

"We naturally discussed various aspects of the situation as it faced us, and I hope we understood each other in a large measure. I was myself greatly gratified to find how near we were to each other, as we have been in the past in spite of different approaches and occasional differences of opinion. In a complex situation, it is inevitable that there should be different approaches and varying emphasis, but it is the fundamentals that matter. As I talked to Mahatma Gandhi and tried to follow his arguments, I saw and heard the passion in his eyes and words. And I know that passion was the passion of India, that is, the passion that is moving vast numbers of Indians today.

"What the future may bring to us or the world I do not know, but we cannot remain as passive spectators of others' deeds. When Mahatma Gandhi says to the British 'withdraw', he says something which every self-respecting Indian feels. I have ventured to say that previously in cruder language when I said 'get-out'. What does this mean? It does not mean that Englishmen as individuals should pack up and go. It means the transfer of political power completely, or the decision on the part of the British to do so, without raising any arguments as to what we do about it."

—*The Pioneer* : June 19, 1942.

95. A TRIPLE TRAGEDY

The *National Herald* is an institution. It has a directorate which has no personal or financial interest in it. It is founded by Jawaharlal Nehru. It is only in India that the security of such a paper can be forfeited. In fact, why any security at all from it? And they need the greatest assistance possible from him (Jawaharlal Nehru) in the war effort. They have exploited his stray sayings torn from their context. In any case, what do the Government expect from their repressive policy? Consider this forfeiture of security in conjunction with the arrest and detention of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, ex-Minister, the organizer of the Congress in U.P. and a Director of the *National Herald*. Put these two acts side by side with the wanton and almost indecent search of the A.-I.C.C. Office. And the tragedy is complete. This triple act is, in my opinion, a great hindrance to national war effort. It is so mad as to amount to an invitation to the Japanese to walk into India. It is a justification for my friendly invitation to the foreign Government to abdicate in favour of the nation, whatever it may be. It is bold, it is hazardous. The British are capable of taking risks such as very few are. Let them take the risk I have suggested and it will be their greatest war effort. It alone can save the situation, if anything can, so far as India is concerned.

—*Harijan* : June 7, 1942.

96. ADVICE TO KHADI WORKERS

I am not going to make a call to the *Khadi* workers, but if there is a general conflagration *Khadi* workers cannot escape it, should not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase 'livery of freedom' applied to *Khadi* by Jawaharlal. *Khadi* must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of Civil Disobedience or Non-co-operation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We should reason with the authorities, but

if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore, no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them.

—*Harijan* : July 5, 1942.

97. INEFFECTIVE SYMPATHY

Q. Why should not the Congress declare that as long as India is herself in bondage, she can be neither a friend nor an enemy of any country? What is the value of her sympathies with China, Russia etc., when she has no freedom to assist them in her own way? Has Russia thought of India?

A. You are right. India's sympathy can give no effective help, as her enmity can do no harm to any person or nation so long as India is herself not free. Nevertheless, Pandit Jawaharlal, with his international outlook and generosity, has accustomed us to express our sympathy to nations in distress without expectation of like return. We lose nothing by expressing sympathy, even though we realize that it can cut no ice. If Russia has no thought of India today, in the long run she is bound to recognize the utterly unselfish character of our sympathy. It should not be forgotten that sympathy without ability to render effective help has its own moral value. We receive with appreciation sympathy from those who we know are unable to render us effective help in our struggle.

—*Harijan* : July 26, 1942.

98. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S PRESS NOTE

The attached copies of certain documents relating to the Congress Working Committee's discussions concerning the drafting of the A.-I.C.C. Resolution of May 1, 1942, are published for general information.*

* The documents were recovered by the Government during the police raid on the A.-I.C.C. Office at Allahabad on May 26, 1942.

The following is the copy of a typed document recovered from the office of the All-India Congress Committee, Allahabad, during the police search effected on May 26, 1942 :

Gandhiji was not present at this meeting of the Working Committee. But he sent from Wardha a draft resolution for the consideration of the Committee. Miraben, who brought the draft, explained how Gandhiji's mind was working along the lines sketched in it. The Committee gave earnest and careful consideration to the draft. (*Appendix-I*).

The draft contained the following points :—

- (i) A demand to the British Government to clear out ;
- (ii) India is a zone of war as a result of British Imperialism ;
- (iii) No foreign assistance needed for the freedom of the country ;
- (iv) India has no quarrel with any country ;
- (v) If Japan invaded India, it shall meet with non-violent resistance ;
- (vi) Form of non-co-operation laid down, and
- (vii) Foreign soldiers—a grave menace to Indian freedom.

Jawaharlalji : Gandhiji's draft is an approach which needs careful consideration. Independence means, among other things, the withdrawal of British troops. It is proper ; but has it any meaning our demanding withdrawal ? Nor can they reasonably do it, even if they recognize independence ? Withdrawal of troops and the whole apparatus of civil administration will create a vacuum which cannot be filled up immediately.

If we said to Japan that her fight was with British Imperialism and not us, she would say : "We are glad the British Army is withdrawn ; we recognize your independence. But we want certain facilities now. We shall defend you against aggression. We want aerodromes, freedom to pass our troops through your country. This is necessary in self-defence." They might seize strategic points and proceed to Iraq, etc. The masses won't be touched, if only the strategic points are captured. Japan is an Imperialist country. Conquest of India is in their plan. If Bapu's approach is

accepted, we become passive partners of the Axis Powers. This approach is contrary to the Congress policy for the last two years and a half. The Allied countries will have a feeling that we are their enemies.

Kripalani* intervening said that the draft, was a declaration of their stand. England and America might put what interpretation they liked, but they (the Congress) had no designs against them.

Maulana Saheb : What is our position? Shall we tell the British Government to go and allow the Japanese and Germans to come, or do we want the British Government to stay and stem the new aggression?

Pantji† : I want the right of self-government and we shall exercise it as we like. If the British troops and the rest must withdraw, let them do so by all means and we shall shift for ourselves.

Jawaharlalji : A draft like this weakens their (the British Government's) position. They will treat India as an enemy country and reduce it to dust and ashes. They will do here what they did in Rangoon.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel : The draft says to the British : "You have proved your utter incompetence. You cannot defend India. We cannot defend it either because you won't let us do. But if you withdraw, there is a chance for us."

Asaf Ali : The draft asks us to accept non-violence for all time.

Achyut Patwardhan : It was put to Gandhiji. He said that the Congress can take the stand that under the existing circumstances non-violence was the best policy.

Jawaharlal Nehru : The whole background of the draft is one which will inevitably make the world think that we are passively lining up with the Axis Powers. The British are asked to withdraw. After the withdrawal, we are to negotiate with Japan and possibly come to some terms with her. These terms may include a large measure of civil control

*Acharya J. B. Kripalani.

†Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant.

by us, a certain measure of military control by them, passage of armies through India, etc.

Kripalaniji : Why should it mean passage of armies through India, etc? Just as we call upon the British and the Americans to withdraw their armies, so also we ask others to keep out of our frontiers. If they do not, we fight.

Jawaharlal Nehru : Whether you will like it or not, the exigencies of the war situation will compel them to make India a battle-ground. In sheer self-defence, they cannot afford to keep out. They will walk through the country. You can't stop it by Non-violent Non-co-operation. Most of the population will not be affected by the march. Individuals may resist in a symbolic way. The Japanese armies will go to Iraq, Persia, etc., throttle China and make the Russian situation more difficult.

The British will refuse our demand for military reasons, apart from others. They can't allow India to be used by Japan against them. Our reaction, in the event of refusal, will be a passive, theoretical lining up with the Axis Powers. Japan may have an excuse for attack. We get involved in a hopeless logical quandary. We get hostility from every other element outside the Axis Powers. Japan will occupy strategic points. We get no chance to offer mass Civil Disobedience. Our policy of sympathy with one group is completely changed.

So far as the main action is concerned, there is no difficulty about Bapu's draft. But the whole thought and background of the draft is one of favouring Japan. It may not be conscious. Three factors influence our decisions in the present emergency. (1) Indian Freedom, (2) Sympathy for certain larger causes, (3) Probable outcome of the War—who is going to win? It is Gandhiji's feeling that Japan and Germany will win. This feeling unconsciously governs his decision. The approach in the draft is different from mine.

Achyut Patwardhan : I agree with Jawaharlalji's background, but there are certain difficulties. The British Government is behaving in a suicidal manner. If we do not take decisions, Jawaharlalji's attitude will lead to abject and unconditional co-operation with British machinery, which

must collapse. If the battle of India is to be fought by Wavell, we shall do ourselves discredit if we attach ourselves to him. We talk of allying ourselves with the Allied nations. I doubt if America is a progressive force. The existence of the American army in India is not a fact which improves our situation. I was opposed to the Poona offer, but not to talks with Cripps. Jawaharlalji's statement, after the negotiations broke down, distressed me. The trend of thought it disclosed lands us in a position which obliges us to offer unconditional co-operation to Britain. Our co-operation with Britain is an invitation to Japan.

Rajendra Babu : We cannot produce the proper atmosphere, unless we adopt Bapu's draft. The Government has closed the door on armed resistance. We have only unarmed resistance to offer. We have, therefore, to strengthen Bapu's hands.

Govind Ballabh Pant : There is no difference of opinion so far as non-violence is concerned. There may be two opinions as to its effectiveness. Non-violent Non-co-operation is not meant to be a demonstration. It is designed to prevent invasion or resist occupation. What will be our attitude to armed resistance? Shall we assist it or at least do nothing to hamper it?

Jawaharlal Nehru : It retains the approach in Bapu's original draft. The approach is a variation from the attitude we have taken up about Allies. At least I have committed myself to that sympathy 100 per cent. It would be dishonourable for me to resign from that position. There is no reason why that choice should arise. But it has arisen somewhat in this approach. The portion of the draft about resistance has some substance. The portion about minorities, princes, is unrealistic. We go on thinking in terms of what was and not what is, and that is a dangerous thing in a rapidly changing situation. There is no difference among us about (i) our reactions to Government and (ii) our total inability to co-operate with the Government. Our programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection helps the Government, but that cannot be helped. (iii) We do not embarrass the British war effort, because that in itself would mean aid to the invader. We agree on these points, but we have different ways of getting

at them. It is true that since my approach is different, my emphasis, too, would be different.

Pantji : One test to apply to the draft is : Whether it is consistent with our previous resolutions. The language about the condemnation of Cripps' proposals is highly exaggerated. If the proposals were so bad, why did we spend so much time over them? My attitude today is : We must do our utmost to defend the country and swallow many things. If I can't co-operate with the British, it is because it is not consistent with our dignity. But the approach in the draft makes every soldier I see my enemy.

Asaf Ali : The draft will not make any effective appeal to the Axis Powers. Telling the British to withdraw, will do nobody any good.

Bhulabhai Desai : No resolution is called for. We passed a resolution at Wardha which expressed our definite position. The resolution is made in an unreal way. It is inconsistent with our previous stand. We have said that, if offered an opportunity, we shall side with the Allies.

Rajaji : I do not think the changed* draft is different from the original. We appeal to Britain and Japan. The appeal to Britain will fail, but certain tangible results will follow. The entire policy of the Congress will be reinterpreted and the new interpretation will go terribly against us. Japan will say 'excellent.'

I do not agree that if Britain goes away, India will have some scope for organizing itself even if Japan should make some headway. Japan will fill the vacuum created by the British withdrawal. Our reaction to evils of Britain should not make us lose our sense of perspective. It is no use getting upset on small matters. Do not run into the arms of Japan, which is what the resolution comes to.

Dr. Pattabhi : It is a comprehensive and appropriate draft. A time has come when we must realize ourselves. After the rejection of Cripps proposals, we must reconsider our attitude and re-state our position. We have varied our position from time to time during the time the War has been on. Poona has a variation from the old position. Bombay

* The reference is to certain amendments to the original draft suggested by Babu Rajendra Prasad.

has a variation from Poona. Bombay was followed by C.D. and C.D. by Cripps.

Sarojini Naidu : The changed draft is much better than the original. There is, however, a great deal of unnecessary matter in the resolution. The appeal is a rhetorical gesture. It is, however, good as an expression of our extreme disgust and dislike and hatred of the British Government.

The appeal to Japan is a useless gesture. India is a part of the map they have drawn.

I agree with the Non-violent Non-co-operation part of the resolution. It can be recast, keeping the substance of the original.

The draft is a narrowing of sympathies not consistent with the position we have taken up.

I do not like foreign soldiers. The portion dealing with them is good.

Biswanath Das : I see two conflicting views in the Committee. This division of opinion is fatal at this juncture. I generally agree with the draft. The Cripps proposals, if accepted, would have kept us in permanent bondage. The appeal to Britain to withdraw is very proper. We can tell them that neither will they defend us, nor allow us to defend ourselves.

The protest against the introduction of American soldiers in the country is also proper. They have brought in troops from Dominions and other foreign nations. This is highly objectionable and dangerous.

Bardoloi : One portion of the draft is operative and another ideological. If we lay emphasis on the operative portion, the differences will be greatly minimized. For joint action, I should be prepared to delete the portion which deals with the ideological background. We are already in the danger zone. This is no time for ideological discussion. Let us concentrate on the present action, which cannot be anything other than Non-violent Non-co-operation.

Satyamurti : The changed draft (after certain amendments by Babu Rajendra Prasad) is an improvement. I do not agree with the objection to the entry of foreign soldiers. India may defend herself even with the aid of foreign soldiers. I think we must make an approach to the Muslim League.

Achyut Patwardhan : I am in general agreement with the draft. The open-door policy is at an end. The resolution emphasizes a factor which has been emphasized by every intelligent man, i.e., the War is lost unless the people are in it. The War is an Imperialist war. Our policy can be that we take no sides. The world is in the grip of fear-complex. I would consider the position, if the Allies could defeat the Axis. But I see clearly that Britain is going towards the deep. We want to create neutrality. Do not look to Japan or Britain.

Jairamdasji : The criticism that the draft is pro-Japanese is wrong. Opposition to the Japanese invasion is there in the draft.

The mention of foreign armies in the draft is very appropriate. The Indian history bears ample testimony of the highly undesirable consequences which foreign armies have led to. The draft creates an atmosphere of neutrality. The attempt is worth making.

Sardar Sahib : I see that there are two distinct opinions in the Committee. We have ever since the outbreak of War tried to pull together. But it may not be possible on this occasion. Gandhiji has taken a definite stand. If his background is unsuitable to some members of the Committee, there is the other background which is unsuitable to us. The first four or five paragraphs of the draft is a reply to the Cripps Mission. Cripps is a clever fellow. He has gone about saying that his mission has not been a failure. The draft is a perfect reply to his propaganda.

I am not in favour of making any approach to Jinnah. We have made repeated attempts and courted many insults. The Congress today is reeling under two blows : One Cripps' and the other Rajaji's resolutions which have done us enormous harm.

I have placed myself in the hands of Gandhiji. I feel that he is instinctively right in the lead he gives in all critical situations.

In Bombay, at the time of the A.-I.C.C. meeting, there was a difference in approach, but the door to negotiation was closed. In Bardoli, it was made clear that the door was still open and our sympathies were with Allies. It is time the door

is finally closed after the repeated insults heaped upon us. I agree with the draft before us. If there is any pro-Fascist hint in the draft, let it be removed.

Acharya Narendra Deo : I do not agree with the view that the War is one and indivisible. The aims of Russia and China are not identical with those of Britain and America. If it is one, we should join the War and side with Britain. Our position has not been that we want power because without it we cannot kindle the national spirit. Our position has been that if the War was a people's war and there was proof of it in action, we are willing to throw in our weight on the side of Democracies.

It is necessary to counteract the mischievous propaganda of Cripps. Cripps has been saying that internal differences have prevented a settlement. Rajaji has strengthened his hands. Japanese threat has also influenced our attitude to Britain. It has led us to modify even Poona.

We have to make it clear that Japanese threat has not unnerved us. We can tell the British to go, leaving us to our fate.

Whatever unreality there is in Indian politics is due to the British rule. Let it go and the unreality will disappear.

I am not interested in defeating Hitlerite Germany. I am more interested in war aims and peace aims.

Maulana Sahib : The discussion has been useful. But it is not clear to me the differences that divide the two groups.

Cripps was a great hope. He came here with the reputation of a radical. But he proved a great disappointment. He made things worse. Cripps, in his statements after the failure of negotiations, has emphasized two points : (1) His mission has proved the sincerity of the intentions of the British Government towards India, (ii) The anti-Japanese front is the outcome of this mission.

All this is false propaganda. Great Britain has made it impossible for us to defend our country. But we have something to do about the Japanese aggression.

It is my firm belief that nationalism is the only religion for a subject nation. If I feel that Japan was better than Britain and her invasion was for the good of India, I would

have said so in public. But it is not so. Gandhiji's prescription is the only alternative, though I doubt its effectiveness.

Jawaharlal's vs. Gandhiji's Draft

Since the draft presented by Rajendra Babu was not acceptable to Jawaharlalji and a few other members of the Committee, the President asked Jawaharlalji to prepare a draft of his own. Jawaharlalji presented the following draft in the next sitting of the Committee. (*Appendix-II*).

The draft sought to cover the points contained in Bapu's draft, but the approach was different. The discussions showed that the division of opinion revealed in the earlier discussions persisted. Jawaharlalji modified his draft with a view to accommodate better the other group, but the difference in approach remained. The draft was not acceptable to the whole Committee. Thereupon, the President put the two drafts to vote. Those who voted for Gandhiji's draft, as modified by Rajendra Babu, were : Sardar Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Babu, J. B. Kripalani, Shankarrao Deo, Sarojini Naidu, Profulla Chandra Ghosh. Those who voted for Jawaharlalji's draft were : Jawaharlal Nehru, Govind Ballabh Pant, Bhulabhai Desai and Asaf Ali. Among the invitees Shri Jairamdas Daulatram, Acharya Narendra Deo, Achyut Patwardhan, Bardoloi, Biswanath Das voted for Rajendra Babu's draft, and Shri Satyamurti and Mrs. Pandit voted for Jawaharlal's draft.

Rajendra Babu's draft was passed by the Committee in the morning sitting, on May 1, 1942. The subject was, however, reopened by the President in the afternoon sitting. He pleaded with those who supported Rajendra Babu's draft to accept Jawaharlalji's draft and make it a unanimous resolution. It was President's opinion that there was practically no difference between the two drafts, though the protagonists of both the drafts held that a vital difference in approach persisted. Supporters of Rajendra Babu's draft yielded to the wish of the President and accepted Jawaharlalji's draft. The draft resolution for the A.-I.C.C., as was finally passed by the Committee, is as follows :

(*See Appendix-II.*)

APPENDIX I

Draft No. I

Whereas the British War Cabinet's proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps have shown up British Imperialism in its nakedness as never before, the A.-I.C.C. has come to the following conclusions :—

“The A.-I.C.C. is of opinion that Britain is incapable of defending India. It is natural that whatever she does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. The policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.

“Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. India's participation in the War has not been with the consent of the representatives of the Indian people. It was purely a British act. If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that, if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of Japanese or any aggressor attacking India.

“The A.-I.C.C. is, therefore, of opinion that the British should withdraw from India. The plea that they should remain in India for protecting the Indian Princes is wholly untenable. It is additional proof of their determination to maintain their hold over India. The Princes need have no fear from unarmed India.

“The question of majority and minority is a creation of the British Government and would disappear on their withdrawal.

“For all these reasons the Committee appeals to Britain, for the sake of India's safety and for the sake of world peace,

to let go her hold of India even if she does not give up all Asiatic and African possessions.

"This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom, the Committee is of opinion that India, while welcoming universal sympathy, does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore, the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal, the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete Non-violent Non-cooperation to the Japanese forces and not render assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete Non-cooperation.

"It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of Non-violent Non-cooperation :—

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor, nor obey any of his order.

2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice, nor wish him ill.

3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields, we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.

4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid, we may not refuse it.

5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting, our Non-cooperation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

"At present, our Non-cooperation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete Non-cooperation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore, not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our Non-cooperation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist

the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

“It is necessary for the Committee to make a clear declaration in regard to the scorched earth policy. If, in spite of our non-violent resistance, any part of the country falls into Japanese hands, we may not destroy our crops, water supply, etc., if only because it will be our endeavour to regain them. The destruction of war material is another matter and may, under certain circumstances, be a military necessity. But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

“Whilst Non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of *Swaraj* consists in the millions of India wholeheartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not, it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exercise the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence.

“The A.-I.C.C. is of opinion that it is harmful to India's interests and dangerous to the cause of India's freedom to introduce foreign soldiers in India. It, therefore, appeals to the British Government to remove these foreign legions and henceforth stop further introduction. It is a crying shame to bring foreign troops in spite of India's inexhaustible man-power and is a proof of the immorality that British Imperialism is.”

APPENDIX II

A.-I.C.C. Resolution

“In view of the imminent peril of invasion that confronts India, and the attitude of the British Government, as shown

again in the recent proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps, the All-India Congress Committee has to declare afresh India's policy and to advise the people in regard to the action to be undertaken in the emergencies that may arise in the immediate future.

"The proposals of the British Government, and their subsequent elucidation by Sir Stafford Cripps, have led to greater bitterness and distrust of the Government and the spirit of non-co-operation with British has grown. They have demonstrated that even in this hour of danger, not only to India but to the cause of the United Nations, the British Government functions as an Imperialist Government and refuses to recognize the independence of India or to part with any real power.

"India's participation in the War was a purely British act, imposed upon the Indian people without the consent of their representatives. While India has no quarrel with the people of any country, she has repeatedly declared her antipathy to Nazism and Fascism as to Imperialism. If India were free, she would have determined her own policy and might have kept out of the War, though her sympathies would, in any event, have been with the victims of aggression. If, however, circumstances had led her to join the War, she would have done so as a free country fighting for freedom, and her defence would have been organized on a popular basis with the national army under national control and leadership, and with intimate contacts with the people. A free India would know how to defend herself in the event of any aggressor attacking her. The present Indian army is, in fact, an offshoot of the British army and has been maintained till now mainly to hold India in subjection. It has been completely segregated from the general population, who can in no sense regard it as their own.

"The essential difference between the imperialist and the popular conceptions of defence is demonstrated by the fact that while foreign armies are invited to India for that defence, the vast man-power of India herself is not utilized for the purpose. India's past experience teaches her that it is harmful to her interest and dangerous to the cause of her freedom to introduce foreign armies in India. It is significant and

extraordinary that India's inexhaustible man-power should remain untapped, while India develops into a battle-ground between foreign armies fighting on her soil or on her frontiers, and her defence is not supposed to be a subject fit for popular control. India resents this treatment of her people as chattels to be disposed of by foreign authority.

"The All-India Congress Committee is convinced that India will attain her freedom through her own strength and will retain it likewise. The present crisis, as well as the experience of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, makes it impossible for the Congress to consider any schemes or proposals which retain, even in a partial measure, British control and authority in India. Not only the interests of India but also Britain's safety, and world peace and freedom demand that Britain must abandon her hold on India. It is on the basis of independence alone that India can deal with Britain or other nations.

"The Committee repudiates the idea that freedom can come to India through interference or invasion by any foreign nation, whatever the professions of that nation may be. In case an invasion takes place, it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of Non-violent Non-co-operation, as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way. The Committee would, therefore, expect the people of India to offer complete Non-violent Non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor, nor obey any of his orders. We may not look to him for favours nor fall to his bribes. If he wishes to take possession of our homes and our fields, we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist them. In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting, our Non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our Non-co-operation with the invader. Judging from their attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference.

"The success of such a policy of Non-co-operation and non-violent resistance to the invader will largely depend on

the intensive working out of the Congress constructive programme, and more especially the programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection in all parts of the country."

—*The Hindustan Times* : August 6, 1942.

99. 'DISHONOURABLE TACTICS'

Commenting on the Government of India's Press Note, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a statement said :

"I have just seen for the first time the Government's communique issuing certain documents obtained during a police raid from the A.-I.C.C. Office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally, such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

"It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion, the Assistant Secretary took brief notes un-officially, apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate, during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

"In our discussions, Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided, as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

"Thus, when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty

was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

"In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that, unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the War really became one for all peoples, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

"The reference to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China etc. In any event, he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even at the point of death. They were never to submit.

"It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan, giving to her right of passage etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression."

—*The Hindustan Times* : August 6, 1942.

100. NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF

Q. The whole inference of Nehru's statements in the documents is that your belief is that Japan and Germany will win the War. Does that represent your considered opinion?

A. You have been good enough to show me the Pandit's statement on the documents issued by the Government. After his full and frank explanation, I hardly think I need answer your questions. I wholly agree with the opinion expressed by him. That, however, is his own reaction to the Draft Resolution sent to the Working Committee. As the language of the Draft shows, it had many *i*'s to be dotted and *l*'s to be crossed. It was sent through Miraben to whom I had explained the implications of the Draft, and I said to her or to the

friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the Draft, that there was an omission deliberate from my Draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia. For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from the Pandit about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the Resolution.

But I may add that I have never, even in the most unguarded moment, expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that, I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her Imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once and I repeat that, in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers, it will be because even at a critical moment—most critical in her history—she has most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of Imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half. The suppressed races of the earth will never see the fine distinction that the Pandit, and following him I, can see and make between Fascism and Imperialism. The difference, if any, discerned by the man-in-the-street will be not of kind but only of degree, and, therefore, I have pleaded and shall plead, even as I am fighting with all the earnestness I command, that Britain will shed the taint, and that her great ally America will make her do so, and then be sure of victory, no matter how prolonged the struggle and what cost it requires. To say the least, then, the Allied Powers will earn the blessings of dumb but countless millions, apart from gaining men and material that the free association of these peoples will bring to the Allies. I would count their blessings to be of far higher value than every other consideration. I have, therefore, nothing to withdraw and nothing to be ashamed of about the Draft I had the privilege of sending to the Working Committee.

Q. Nehru states that according to your plans after British withdrawal, India would possibly negotiate with Japan and even allow her a large measure of civil control, military bases in India and right of passage for her troops.

A. As to your second question, I can only say that you have put it because, I regret to have to say, you have not studied my writings in *Harijan* before the Draft was written and after. Having such confidence—for which many of my friends say I have no warrant—in the efficacy of the weapon of Non-violent Non-co-operation with all its implications that I have presented to the nation, I maintain that I could not be guilty of harbouring any such thought you have attributed to me. The Pandit has explained quite clearly what could be his own meaning and interpretation of my Draft. I add by way of emphasis that I had purposely incorporated the sentence about negotiations with Japan, and if ultimately it was dropped and I associated myself with the deletion, I did so out of my regard for my co-workers—not because I was uncertain as to what I meant to do. It is the essence of the use of the weapon that you will always give your opponent the opportunity of doing the right thing, and if India became an independent nation tomorrow and I was witness to the grand phenomenon, I would certainly advise and plead with the provisional Government to send me—old as I am—to Japan and I would plead with her, in the first instance, to free China, her great neighbour, from the menace that Japan has become and to tell her that if she does not do this elementary justice, she will have to count upon the stubborn resistance of millions who had at long last found themselves in possession of a thing which every nation prizes before everything else. That gentle notice, or entreaty it should be called,—because that entreaty will not be backed at least to-morrow with any military show, because I will not dangle before Japan the show that will still be made by the Allied Powers whose operations will go on in India with the free consent of India become free,—will carry with it the power implied in the use of the matchless moral weapon of Non-violent Non-co-operation. And I am sure I will make the appeal not without hope of success. That was the meaning of the sentence the use of which, at the present juncture, is intended to bring discredit upon my devoted head. I shall take the discredit and so much the better, if I can take India's freedom also with it.

—*The Hindustan Times* : August 6, 1942.

101. ON 'QUIT INDIA' RESOLUTION

We shall get our freedom by fighting. It cannot fall from the skies. I know fully well that Britishers will have to give us freedom when we have made sufficient sacrifices and proved our strength. We must remove hatred for the British from our hearts. At least, in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was. The reason for this is that at this moment they are in distress. My friendship demands that I must make them aware of their mistakes, as I am not in the position in which they are. They are on the brink of a ditch and are about to fall into it. Therefore, even if they want to cut off my hands, my friendship demands that I should try to pull them out of the ditch.

This is my claim at which many people may laugh, but all the same I say that this is true. At a time when I am about to launch the biggest fight in my life, there can be no hatred for the British in my heart. The thought, that because they are in difficulties I should give them a push, is totally absent from my mind. It has never been there. It may be that in a moment of anger they might do things which might provoke you. Nevertheless, you should not resort to violence and put non-violence to shame. When such a thing happens you may take it that you will not find me alive, wherever I may be. Their blood will be on your head. If you don't understand this, it would be better if you reject this Resolution. It will redound to your credit.

How can I blame you for things which you may not be able to grasp? There is one principle in the fight which you must adopt. Never believe—as I have never believed—that the British are going to fail. I don't consider them to be a nation of cowards. I know that before they accept defeat, every soul in Britain will be sacrificed. They may be defeated and they may leave you just as they left the people of Burma, Malaya and other places, with the idea of recapturing lost ground when they can. That may be their military strategy, but supposing they leave us, what happens to us? In that case, Japan will come here. The coming in of Japan will

mean the end of China, and perhaps of Russia, too. In these matters, Pandit Nehru is my *Guru*. I don't want to be the instrument of Russia's defeat, nor of China's. If that happens, I would hate myself.

When I raised the slogan 'Quit India', people in India, who were then feeling despondent, felt that I had placed before them a new thing. If you want real freedom you will have to come together and such coming together will create a true democracy—a democracy the like of which has not been so far witnessed, nor have there been any attempts made for such a type of true democracy. I have read a good deal about the French Revolution. Carlyle's works I read while in Jail. I have great admiration for the French people. Pandit Jawaharlal has told me all about the Russian Revolution. But I hold that though theirs was a fight for the people, it was not a fight for the real democracy which I envisage. My democracy means that everyone is his own master. I have read sufficient history, and I have not seen such an experiment on such a large scale for the establishment of democracy by non-violence. Once you understand these things, you will forget differences between Hindus and Muslims.

The Resolution that is placed before you says that we don't want to remain frogs in a well. We are aiming at a World Federation. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence. There are people who may call me a visionary, but I tell you I am a real *Bania* and my business is to obtain *Swaraj*.

—*The Hindustan Times*: August 8, 1942.

102. 'STAND ALONE'

I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to-day to the contrary, and although I may have forfeited the regard of many a friend of the West—even trust of some of them—even for their love and for their friendship I must not suppress the voice within me. Call it conscience, call it anything you like; call it the promptings of my basic nature: I do not mind how you describe it, but there is something there. I have learnt psychology and I know exactly

what it is, although I may not be able to describe it to you. That voice tells me that I shall have to fight against the whole world and stand alone; it also tells me: 'You are safe so long as you stare the world in the face, although the world may have blood-shot eyes. Do not fear that world, but go ahead with the fear of God in you.' That thing is within me. You have to forsake wife, friends, forsake everything in the world. I want to live the whole span of my life. But I don't think I will live so long. When I am gone, India will be free; and not only will India be free, but the whole world will be free.

I want Englishmen and all the United Nations to examine their hearts. What crime has the Congress committed in demanding independence to-day? Is it wrong to do so? Is it right to distrust that organization? I hope Englishmen won't do it. I hope that it won't be done by the President of the United States and by the Chinese Generalissimo Marshal Chiang-Kai-Shek, who is still fighting desperate battles with Japan for his existence. After having owned Jawaharlal as a comrade, I hope he won't do it. I fell in love with Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek. She was my interpreter, and I have no reason to doubt that she was a faithful interpreter to her husband.

Even if all the United Nations oppose me, even if the whole of India tries to persuade me that I am wrong, I will go ahead not for India's sake alone, but for the sake of the world.

—*The Hindustan Times* : August 9, 1942.

103. WORLD FEDERATION

Q. Instead of striving for India's freedom, why would you not strive for a far greater and nobler end — World Federation? Surely, that will automatically include India's freedom as the greater includes the less.

A. There is an obvious fallacy in this question. Federation is undoubtedly a greater and nobler end for free nations. It is a greater and nobler end for them to strive to promote Federation than be self-centred, seeking only to pre-

serve their own freedom. They are finding it difficult, if not impossible, for individuals to retain freedom without a combination. It has become a necessity while the War lasts, and it would be good if they voluntarily pledge themselves now to remain united even after the War. Defeat of any one member should make no difference. The survivors will not rest content till the defeated member is avenged. Still, this won't be a World Federation. It would be a mere defensive alliance between a certain combination.

The very first step to a World Federation is to recognize the freedom of conquered and exploited nations. Thus, India, Africa have to be freed. The second step would be to announce to and assure the aggressor Powers, in the present instance, the Axis Powers, that immediately the War ends, they will be recognized as members of the World Federation in the same sense as the Allies. This presupposes an agreement among the members of the World Federation as to the irreducible fundamentals. If this is not forthcoming, the Federation will fall to pieces under the slightest strain. Therefore, it has to come about voluntary. I suggest that non-violence is the basis of voluntariness. It is because of all the nations of the world, India is the one nation which has the message, however limited and crude it may be, in that direction, that it must have immediate freedom to enable it to play its part.

You may not quote against me Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I know that they do not hold the view I hold on non-violence. When India gets her freedom, the probability is that I shall no longer be wanted by any party and everybody would be war-mad. Nevertheless, there will be, I am quite sure, a respectable number of votaries of non-violence who will make their contribution. I hope you will agree with me, that India in seeking first to be free, is not retarding Federation. It wants her freedom for the sake of the nations in distress, especially China and Russia, and for the whole of humanity—in your language, World Federation. You will also, I hope, see that no universal Federation is possible without India becoming free now. It would be an earnest, too, of the Allied declarations.

—*Harijan* : August 9, 1942.

104. FROM A LETTER TO MARSHAL CHIANG-KAI-SHEK

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China, and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come close to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to British Power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle,

—*The Hindustan Times* : August 16, 1942.

105. JAWAHARLAL — A JEWEL AMONG MEN

In a cable sent to Mr. Krishna Menon, London, on the occasion of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday, Mahatma Gandhi said :

"Jawaharlal is a jewel among men. Happy is the land that owns him. Something is radically wrong with the system that has no better use of persons like him than as prisoners."

—*The Hindustan Times* : November 14, 1944.

106. FIROZ KHAN NOON'S ALLEGATIONS

In a rejoinder to Sir Firoz Khan Noon's speech at San Francisco, declaring that Gandhiji's politics were out of date and he should retire in favour of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji refuted all the allegations against himself and the Congress and said :

Next I come to Sir Firoz's statement about Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and me.* He should know that I have called the Pandit my successor. He does not need to come to the front. He is in the front. The Government of India would not let him work as he would. He and I are friends. But we are not rivals. We are both servants of the people and the platform of service is as big as the world. It is never overcrowded. On it, there is always room for more, and as on the point of independence we have differences, we are always brothers-in-arms. He has undoubtedly the advantage of youth over me. Let Sir Firoz ask his Government, on pain of resignation, to release Pandit Nehru and his fellow-prisoners and he will see his wish fulfilled. I shall give him my hearty co-operation in its fulfilment.

—*The Hindustan Times* : May 7, 1945.

107. AS GOOD A NATIONALIST AS INTERNATIONALIST

In a foreword to a book entitled *Nehru — Your Neighbour* by Shri P. D. Tandon, containing numerous writings of numerous admirers of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji said :

"The book gives at a glance a good picture of the Patriot as seen by various eyes. He shines easily as father, brother, writer, traveller, patriot or internationalist. Nevertheless, it is as an ardent devotee of his country and its freedom, on whose altar he would sacrifice all his other loves, that the reader will specially single him out from the essays. Be it said to his credit, however, that he will consider it beneath his dignity

* The statement read as follows : "Gandhi is in the hands of the reactionary and orthodox Hindus. He would be doing a great service to the country if at this moment he were to retire in favour of young man.

"I feel Nehru would be an excellent successor to Gandhi. He has quite a large support among the Muslims and is not so bigoted as Gandhi, who is at a dead end and stop.

"The only solution is for Nehru to come to the forefront. But Nehru respects Gandhi so much that he would not come forward."

to purchase that freedom at the price of any other country. His nationalism is equal to his internationalism."

—*Harijan* : July 14, 1945.

108. DIFFERENCE OF OUTLOOK

"I want to write about the difference of outlook between us," Gandhiji wrote to Pandit Nehru in one of his letters in the first week of October, 1945. "If the difference is fundamental, then the public should be made aware of it. It would be detrimental to our work for *Swaraj*... to keep them in the dark."

The occasion was a discussion in the Working Committee on the social and economic objectives of the Congress after independence. Differences in outlook in regard to these there has been among the members even before, but they had hitherto largely been on the academic plane. In action, Gandhiji's programme alone held. The realities of the freedom struggle admitted of no other alternative. With freedom round the corner, a re-examination of the fundamental position became a matter of supreme necessity.

At the end of the Working Committee meeting, it was decided that the question should again be taken up in a two or three-day session of the Committee and the position finally clarified. "But whether the Working Committee sits or not," wrote Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru, "I want our position *vis-a-vis* each other to be clearly understood by us... The bond that unites us is not only political... It is immeasurably deeper and... unbreakable. Therefore... I earnestly desire that in the political field also, we should understand each other clearly... We both live for the cause of India's freedom and we should both gladly die for it... Whatever we get praise or blame is immaterial to us... I am now an old man... I have, therefore, named you as my heir. I must, however, understand my heir and my heir should understand me. Then alone shall I be content."

Gandhiji's letter continued :

"I am convinced that if India is to attain true freedom and through India the world also, then, sooner or later, the fact must be recognized that people will have

to live in villages, not in towns ; in huts, not in palaces. Crores of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth.

"I hold that without Truth and Non-violence there can be nothing but destruction of humanity. We can realize Truth and Non-violence only in the simplicity of village life, and this simplicity can best be found in the *Charkha* and all that the *Charkha* connotes. I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be that India, too, will go that way and like the proverbial moth burn itself eventually in the flame round which it dances more and more fiercely. But it is my bounden duty up to my last breath to try to protect India, and through India the entire world from such a doom.

"The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs and become self-sufficient. If he does not have this control, he cannot save himself. After all, the world is made up of individuals, just as it is the drops that constitute the ocean... This is a well-known truth....

"While I admire modern science, I find that it is the old, looked at in the true light of modern science which should be reclothed and refashioned aright. You must not imagine that I am envisaging our village life as it is today. The village of my dreams is still in my mind. After all, every man lives in the world of his dreams. My ideal village will contain intelligent human beings. They will not live in dirt and darkness as animals. Men and women will be free and able to hold their own against anyone in the world. There will be neither plague, nor cholera, nor small-pox ; no one will be idle, no one will wallow in luxury. Everyone will have to contribute his quota of manual labour... It is possible to envisage railways, post and telegraph... and the like."

Pandit Nehru wrote back :

"The question before us is not one of Truth *versus* Untruth or Non-violence *versus* Violence. One assumes, as one must, that true co-operation and peaceful methods

must be aimed at, and a society which encourages these must be our objective. The whole question is how to achieve this society and what its content should be. I do not understand why a village should necessarily embody Truth and Non-violence. A village, normally speaking, is backward intellectually and culturally and no progress can be made from a backward environment. Narrow-minded people are much more likely to be untruthful and violent....

"We have to put down certain objectives like a sufficiency of food, clothing, housing, education, sanitation etc. which should be the minimum requirements for the country and for everyone. It is with these objectives in view that we must find out specifically how to attain them speedily. Again, it seems to me inevitable that modern means of transport as well as many other modern developments must continue and be developed. There is no way out of it except to have them. If that is so, inevitably a measure of heavy industry exists. How far that will fit in with a purely village society? Personally, I hope that heavy or light industries should all be decentralized as far as possible, and this is feasible now because of the development of electric power. If two types of economy exist in the country, there would be either conflict between the two, or one will overwhelm the other.

"The question of independence and protection from foreign aggression, both political and economic, has also to be considered in this context. I do not think it is possible for India to be really independent unless she is a technically advanced country; I am not thinking for the moment in terms of just armies, but rather of scientific growth. In the present context of the world, we cannot even advance culturally without a strong background of scientific research in every department. There is today in the world a tremendous acquisitive tendency both in individuals and groups and nations, which leads to conflicts and wars. Our entire society is based on this, more or less. That basis must go and be transformed into one of co-operation, not of isolation which is impossible. If

this is admitted and is found feasible, then attempts should be made to realize it not in terms of an economy which is cut off from the rest of the world, but rather one which co-operates. From the economic or political point of view, an isolated India may well be a kind of vacuum which increases the acquisitive tendencies of others and thus creates conflicts.

"There is no question of palaces for millions of people. But there seems to be no reason why millions should not have comfortable up-to-date homes, where they can lead a cultured existence. Many of the present overgrown cities have developed evils which are deplorable. Probably, we have to discourage this overgrowth and, at the same time, encourage the village to approximate more to the culture of the town.

"How far it is desirable for the Congress to consider these fundamental questions, involving varying philosophies of life, it is for you to judge. I should imagine that a body like the Congress should not lose itself in arguments over such matters which can only produce greater confusion in people's minds, resulting in inability to act in the present. This may also result in creating barriers between the Congress and others in the country. Ultimately, of course, this and other questions will have to be decided by representatives of free India. I have a feeling that most of these questions are thought of and discussed in terms of long ago, ignoring the vast changes that have taken place all over the world during the last generation or more. . . . The world has completely changed since then, possibly in a wrong direction. In any event, any consideration of these questions must keep present facts, forces and the human material we have today in view, otherwise it will be divorced from reality.

"You are right in saying that the world, or a large part of it, appears to be bent on committing suicide. That may be an inevitable development of an evil seed in civilization that has grown. I think it is so. How to get rid of this evil, and yet how to keep the good in the present, as in the past, is our problem. Obviously, there is good in the present."

In their next meeting a month later, Gandhiji returned to the charge. The main premises of Pandit Nehru's letter, he pointed out, were common ground between them. In fact, he could not agree with them more. They were ensuring a parity between urban and rural standards of living, speedy attainment of "a sufficiency of food, clothing, housing, education, sanitation" etc., which should be the "minimum requirements for the country and for everyone," "true co-operation and peaceful methods" and "a society which encourages these" as being the objective to be aimed at, and finally the necessity of keeping in view "present facts, forces and the human material we have today" in any consideration of "these questions." But these, if worked out to their logical conclusion, led not to Pandit Nehru's picture or his way of achieving it, but his own :

"Our talk of yesterday made me glad. I am sorry we could not prolong it further. I feel it cannot be finished in a single sitting, but will necessitate frequent meetings on our part. I am so constituted that if only I were physically fit to run about, I would myself overtake you, wherever you might be, and return after a couple of days' heart-to-heart talk with you. I have done so before. It is necessary we should understand each other well and that others also should clearly understand where we stand. It would not matter if ultimately we might have to agree to differ so long as we remained one at heart, as we are today. The impression that I have gathered from our yesterday's talk is that there is not much difference in outlook. To test this, I put down below the gist of what I have understood. Please correct me if there is any discrepancy.

1. The real question, according to you, is how to bring about man's highest intellectual, economic, political and moral development. I agree entirely.
2. In this, there should be an equal right and opportunity for all.
3. In other words, there should be equality between the town-dwellers and villagers in the standard of food and drink, clothing and other living conditions. In order

to realize this equality today, people should be able to produce their own necessities of life, i.e. clothing, foodstuffs, dwellings and lighting and water.

4. Man is not born to live in isolation but is essentially a social animal, independent and interdependent. No one can or should ride on another's back. If we try to work out necessary conditions for such a life, we are forced to the conclusion that the unit of society should be a village or call it a manageable small group of people who would, in the ideal, be self-sufficient (in the matter of their vital requirements) as a unit and bound together in bonds of mutual co-operation and interdependence.

"If I find that so far I have understood you correctly, I shall take up consideration of the second part of the question in my next."

The discussion, therefore, however, could not be resumed owing to quick political changes and later due to the outbreak of communal disorders. The issue came to a head only in the later part of 1947, after independence. Even then, it could not be carried to a conclusion. It is, however, possible and it would be worthwhile to reconstruct from Gandhiji's writings, in rough outline, his unfinished argument and to examine its implications in the context of the present-day world.

—*M. Gandhi*—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, pp. 544-48.

109. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The course of events has raised the question of South African White man's policy to the highest level. Unseen, it holds the seeds of a world war. The threatened Land and Franchise Bill, which has brought the South African Indian Delegation to India, though superficially it affects the Indians of Natal and Transvaal, is, in effect, a challenge to Asia and, by implication, to the Negro races. India, in her present exalted mood, can view it in no other way. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is Indian to the core but, he being also an internationalist, has made us used to looking at everything in the international light, instead of the parochial. India, weak physically and materially but strong ethically and numerically, has proclaim-

ed from the housetops that her independence would be a threat to no one and no nation, but will be a help to noble effort throughout the world and a promise of relief to all its exploited peoples. Therefore, India regards the contemplated measure of the Union of South Africa as an insult and challenge to them. Does real superiority require outside props in the shape of legislation? Will they not see that every such wall of protection weakens them, ultimately rendering them effeminate? The lesson of history ought to teach them that might is not right. Right only is might. Field-Marshal Smuts is a great soldier-statesman. Will he not perceive that he will be taking the White men of South Africa down the precipice, if he persists in the policy underlying his measure? Let him take counsel with the Allies, to whose victory on the battle-field he contributed not a little. He will surely throw away its fruits, if he persists in his plan of protecting the civilization of the West by artificial means.

—*Harijan* : March 24, 1946.

110. SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has very aptly remarked that at one time India was not lacking in the inventive spirit, but today it has become dormant. Once one gets the scientific outlook, it will be reflected in every act of his—in his eating, drinking, rest, sleep—everything will be scientifically regulated and with a full appreciation of its why and wherefore. Finally, a scientific mind must have detachment or else it will land itself into the lunatic asylum. The *Upanishad* says that whatever there is in this Universe is from Him: It belongs to Him and must be surrendered to Him and then enjoyed. Enjoyment and sorrow, success and failure will then be the same to you.

—*Harijan* : March 31, 1946.

111. SILENT REVOLUTION

Are the women to be given the wheel as a revolutionary weapon, as I have said it is in the hands of a Jawaharlal?

The answer is 'no.' How can it be such in the hands of an ignorant woman? But if every woman in India span, then a silent revolution would certainly be created of which a Jawaharlal could make full use. Unless steam generated was put to proper use, the engine would not run and the person generating the steam might himself be scalded by it even unto death.

—*Harijan* : April 14, 1946.

112. 'FOLLOW Pt. NEHRU'S ADVICE'

The Cabinet Delegation desired Gandhiji's presence at Simla (on May 5, 1946) so as to be available for consultation and advice during the conference. Gandhiji agreed but made it clear that he could give advice only as a friend and well-wisher of the British people and the Cabinet Mission. The Congress viewpoint could be represented only by the Maulana Saheb, its President, or Pandit Nehru. If his advice ran counter to that of Pandit Nehru, for instance, Gandhiji told them, they should follow Pandit Nehru's advice rather than his. But he felt disturbed within himself. He did not like precedence being given to the details of constitution-making over the transfer of power. "You do not know, how uneasy I feel," he wrote to Sir Stafford. "Something is wrong."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. I, p. 204.

113. JAWAHARLAL'S VISIT TO KASHMIR

In common with most of the Indian Princes, Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir was opposed to the setting up of a democratic government and had spared no pains to suppress the nationalist movement in his State. The Kashmir National Conference—a nationalist organization under Sheikh Abdullah—had a natural ally in the Indian National Congress. Either organization was wedded to the ideal of democracy and of the secular State without reference to class, caste or religion. During the Cabinet Mission's visit to India in 1946, and even before, a movement had been going on in the State under the Kashmir National Conference for constitutional changes to

bring the administration of the State in line with the democratic set up in British India. As a result, almost all the leaders of the National Conference had been jailed. It was in this context that in June, 1946, during the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, Pandit Nehru had decided to go to Kashmir in order to arrange for Sheikh Abdullah's defence. The Maharaja's attitude was most insulting.

At Kohala, on the border of Kashmir State, an order was served on Pandit Nehru. He was peremptorily asked to leave Kashmir territory and, on his refusal, he was arrested. But both the Cabinet Mission and the Congress Working Committee needed him in Delhi. Negotiations could not proceed in his absence. The Congress President sent him an urgent message to return at once. Pandit Nehru's first impulse was to take the bit in his mouth :

"In view of the grave discourtesy offered to me by the Kashmir Government in spite of my friendly approaches, I deeply regret I am wholly unable to return until full liberty of movement, including a visit to Srinagar, is accorded to me. I request the Working Committee to proceed without me."

Gandhiji drafted for the Congress President the following reply to be sent to Pandit Nehru :

"I and all are of opinion that your presence here is essential above everything else. Remember that you are under an organization which you have adorned so long. Its needs must be paramount for you and me. Remember also that your honour is ours and your obedience to the Congress call automatically transfers to it the duty of guarding your honour. The Committee is also solicitous equally with you about Sheikh Abdullah's case and the welfare of the Kashmir people. Therefore, I expect you to return in answer to this. You will tell Maharaja Saheb that as soon as you are freed by the Congress, you will return to Kashmir to retrieve your honour and fulfil your mission."

This left Pandit Nehru no option but to return. This he did, though not without an inner struggle. Before returning to Delhi, Pandit Nehru wrote to the Maharaja :

"In view of the directions of the Congress Working

Committee, I have decided to return immediately to Delhi. I have done so, however, on the distinct understanding that I shall return to Kashmir as soon as the urgent work in Delhi permits me to do so. As soon as the date of my return to Kashmir is fixed, I shall inform you of it. I do not know how your Government will view my return and whether it will again attempt to stop it or not. If any such order is passed with a view to stopping me, I shall be unable to obey it. I see no justification whatever for any Government, least of all the Kashmir Government at present, to try to stop the entry of an individual like me, and I cannot submit to any such restriction on my freedom of movement."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 345.

114. INDIA'S JAWAHAR

Speaking after prayers on the 22nd June, 1946, Gandhiji said :

You must be all curious to have news of India's Jawahar (Jewel). Some say he has been injured, some say he has been insulted and so on. You should believe none of these reports. A telegram has been received during the session of Working Committee, saying that he is well and cheerful. I am not yet in a position to give my estimate of the situation arising out of the action taken by Pandit Jawaharlal or the Kashmir Government. For that, I must meet and hear Pandit Jawaharlal first and know the story of the Kashmir Government's doings.

Panditji is under Congress discipline. He is a member of the Congress Working Committee and the President-elect of the Congress. His name is on the list of the proposed Cabinet for the interim period. Therefore, his presence in Delhi is most essential at the present juncture. The Working Committee cannot take the momentous decisions on the problems with which it is faced in his absence, if his presence can be secured. The Kashmir Government has prevented him from entering Kashmir. The Congress President has, therefore, sent him a wire through the Kashmir Government to return to Delhi.

The Maulana Saheb has also sent a message to the Viceroy to put him in telephonic communication with Panditji and also to make arrangements for his quickest return to Delhi. The Viceroy has already moved in the matter.

—*The Hindustan Times* : June 23, 1946.

115. SUCCESS OF THE NEW TEAM

The success of the new team* depends as much upon the manner in which it carries out the work, as upon the manners of the old. If new team breaks with the old, it is bound to fail even like a son who repudiates the inheritance left by his father. It is also bound to fail if those who have retired do not help their successors in every possible way. They were selected by Maulana Saheb not in order to give them importance, but by the reason of their services in their own provinces. A servant does not cease to be a servant when he gives place to another for the sake of accession of new blood, or some other similar and cogent reason. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the old ones will give the new ones the full benefit of their experience.

The most striking change is the retirement of the General Secretary, who had held the post for an unbroken period of ten years. His help will be required constantly by his successors, who are new to the office and new members of the Working Committee. I know they will get all the help they need from Acharya Kripalani. It is a good thing a woman fills for the first time in the history of the Congress the post of General Secretary. Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai was one of the pupils of Acharya Kripalani in the initial stage of the career of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Therefore, she will have full guidance from her *Acharya* in the difficult task to which she is called.

To those to whom the change may give cause for misgivings, I would say that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself makes a fine and stable bridge between the old and the new, assisted as he will be by some of the ablest members of the old team. No one need, therefore, entertain any fear of a break

* The Working Committee of the Congress.

with the past. A healthy circulation is as necessary for the body politic as for the individual.

—*Harijan* : July 14, 1946.

116. NO BED OF ROSES

In 1942, our people showed great valour. But greater valour will be required of us before our goal is reached. We have done much, but more remains to be done. For that, we must have patience and humility and detachment. You should try to understand what happened in 1942, the inner meaning of that struggle and the reason why it stopped short where it did.

This is no time for dalliance or ease. I told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the Crown of Thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed. The Constituent Assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you, but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it.

That does not mean that everybody should want to go into it. Only those should go there who are especially fitted for the task by virtue of their legal training or special talent. It is not a prize to be sought as a reward for sacrifices, but a duty to be faced even like mounting the gallows or sacrifice of one's all at the altar of service.

—*Harijan* : July 21, 1946.

117. PLAYING THE GAME

Louis Fischer : So, you will not yourself go into the Constituent Assembly, but will support it.

Gandhiji : Yes. But it is wrong to say we are going to the Constituent Assembly to seize power. Though it is not a sovereign body, it is as near it as possible.

Louis Fischer : Pandit Jawaharlal said that if the British tried to impose a treaty in terms of the State Paper of May 16, he will tear it up.

Gandhiji : Yes, an imposed treaty from outside.

Louis Fischer : And he said, Congress will not go into groupings.

Gandhiji : Yes. I have said the same thing — unless the Federal Court or some other court gives a different decision. As I see it, much can come out of the Constituent Assembly, if the British will play the game.

Louis Fischer : You say and I believe they will. But supposing they do not, won't you then offer your form of protest?

Gandhiji : Not until the conditions are favourable. But it is wrong to speculate about the future, still more so to anticipate failure. If we take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.

—*Harijan* : August 4, 1946.

118. PLACE OF PRINCES IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

"Unless we unite, not a single State would have survival value," remarked one of the Princes and asked for Gandhiji's opinion on that point.

Gandhiji replied : "I am prepared to join issue on it, though mine is perhaps a solitary voice. Every village has a survival value. Why should not your villages and hence you, the Princes, if you will be part of the people? Aundh, one of the smallest among you, has a greater survival value than many of you. It depends upon you. So far as the people are concerned, they are one with the rest of India already.

"In an article that I have written for the *Harijan*, you will see my picture of Independence. In that picture, the unit is the village community. The superstructure of Independence is not to be built on the village unit, so that the top weighs down on and crushes the forty crores of people who constitute the base."

"But we shall ask our people to draw up their own constitution. The plan of union that we have drawn up, is only intended as a blue print for their consideration," explained another.

"With the best intention in the world," replied Gandhiji, "you will not be able to do that. You are brought up in a different tradition. Therefore, I suggest you should see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about it, if you will really let the people

judge. He is the proper person to deal with this question as the President of the States' People's Conference. You should not be afraid to go to the States' People's Conference with your suggestions. Let the Conference decide finally. Their present policy is sound and not hostile to you, considered as servants and trustees of your people."

Q. We are anxious to serve our mother country. But we are so small that we cannot serve unless we merge into a union.

A. Not in my picture of Independent India. A village unit, as conceived by me, is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-sufficiency. Do not, therefore, think that, unless you have a big union, you will not be able to give a good account of yourself. If Princes are all of one mind and the interest of the people is first and themselves last, theirs will be a more solid union than the one now proposed.

Q. What would you say if the States organized themselves on the basis of village republics first, and then formed them into a union?

A. That would be excellent, but then you will speak a different language and proceed to work in an altogether different way.

Q. But that may take a long time and, unless it is done by people outside first, our people will not take to it.

A. I have said that the States can make the finest contribution to the building up of India's future Independence, if they set the right example in their own territories. They, as individual States being compact, homogenous units, can well afford to make experiments in government. As it is, the Princes have taken the lead only in copying the bad points of the British system. They allow themselves to be led by the nose by their Ministers, whose administrative talent consists only in extorting money from their dumb, helpless subjects. By their tradition and training, they are unfitted to do the job you have let them do. Therefore, my advice to you is : "Make Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru your Chief Minister, if

you are in earnest. Let him present you with an outline. He will naturally consult the people."

Q. We want to organize ourselves into a union so that our people may have *Swaraj* first without waiting for the labours of the Constituent Assembly to be finished, which may take time.

A. That is the wrong way of going about the thing. If you are solicitous of the welfare of the people and want them to come into their own, give them the fullest liberty straight-away. By the time you have done that, the Constituent Assembly will have finished its work. The constitution which it will frame will not be for British India merely, but for the whole of India. That constitution will necessarily provide for a State union or unions, if it is desirable. You should assist them instead of anticipating them by forming your own union. Begin with the individual, and you will not then go wrong. (*Pyarelal*).

—*Harijan* : August 4, 1946.

119. NEHRU — OUR UNCROWNED KING

On the 2nd of September, 1946, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues put on the Crown of Thorns as a matter of supreme duty. For Gandhiji, it was a day of deep heart-searching. In the early hours of the morning, while most slept, he set down to draft a note for Pandit Jawaharlal as to the duty of the members of the new Government in this supreme hour. The substance of it he amplified later in the evening.

Hailing the auspicious day, for which India had so long waited, as a red-letter day in India's history, he described it as only a step towards full Independence which was yet to come. He congratulated and thanked the British Government for having resolved an age-old issue between Britain and India by peaceful settlement. Whatever it might have done in the past, this was not time for cavilling at old wrongs or reviving bitter memories.

"A friend has asked me," proceeded Gandhiji, "as to when the Viceregal Palace would be turned into a hospital

for the poor as was promised by me in the presence of the British Ministers and Rulers of Indian States at the Second Round Table Conference in London. I have not forgotten that promise. I stand by it still. Only the time for it is not yet. We cannot today ask the Viceroy to vacate his Palace, while he still holds office. Power has not yet been completely transferred into our hands. The Viceroy is still here with the army. Sooner, rather than later, complete power would be in our hands, if Pandit Nehru, our uncrowned king and first Prime Minister, and his colleagues fully and worthily do their part. The Viceroy would, then, himself vacate his Palace and, to be sure, it would be turned into a hospital for the poor, including the Harijans who were the poorest of the poor."

—*Harijan* : September 8, 1946.

120. A FOOLISH WASTE OF MONEY

One of the new Ministers was describing to Gandhiji the other day how Pandit Jawaharlal had to wade through a pile of 500 to 800 wires every day and an equal number was probably being received by the Viceroy. Characterizing the practice as a foolish waste of money as well as the Viceroy's and their Ministers' precious time, in one of his prayer addresses, he described how at one time, people used to send wires to the King, little realizing that as a constitutional monarch, he was bound by the advice of his Ministers.

"Time was when the Viceroy was all-powerful and could do everything. But now he has, of his own free will, delegated his powers to the Cabinet of which, like the King of England, he is the constitutional head. The King of England could not do anything without the consent of his Ministers. The people of England had even beheaded one monarch, because he went against their will. I hope that the people's Ministers here would never do anything of the kind, because they have in their possession the matchless weapon of *Satyagraha*, should occasion ever arise for its use. In any case, the people who send these wires, should realize that apart from burdening the recipients and the telegraph offices, they are also wasting the

people's money. The well-to-do imagine it is their money, but it really belongs to the starving masses whom they exploit."

—*Harijan* : September 15, 1946.

121. INDIA'S DUTY TO HELP

Pandit Nehru is the First Minister in the land. He cannot turn a deaf ear to anyone's need. Today we have to confess with shame that we have gone mad and are fighting with each other. People from all over the world are wiring to congratulate India on having come thus far towards independence through non-violence. How, then, can we be enemies of anyone? Our Badshah Khan is a Pathan. His brother-Pathans across the border have come to ask for cloth. It is India's duty to help them. This river of love could and should flow from India. Time was when India not only clothed herself, but her muslins were famed throughout the world for their exquisite texture. Today we are naked in our own country, and all through our own laziness. Money could buy neither grain nor cloth in a country which would feed and clothe herself with ease. I claim that if we put our shoulders to the task and take to spinning, we can fulfil not only our own but the needs of the world in the matter of cloth.

—*Harijan* : October 13, 1946.

122. RUMBLINGS FROM BIHAR

Immediately on seeing the report of the conflagration in Bihar in the Press, Gandhiji sent a wire to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who with his three colleagues had proceeded to Patna from Calcutta. The latter wired in reply that the situation was tense and grave in many parts, but Government were doing their utmost to bring it under control. He himself... had decided to stay in Bihar as long as it might be necessary.

Next day, addressing the prayer congregation, Gandhiji said that the reports of the happenings in Bihar were awful, if true. Pandit Jawaharlal had told the guilty parties that the Central Government would never tolerate such barbarism.

They would even use aerial bombing to put it down. But that was the way of the British. The Congress was an organization of the people. Was the Congress to use the foreign mode of destruction against the people whose representative it was? By suppressing the riots with the aid of the military, they would be suppressing India's freedom. And yet what was Panditji to do if the Congress has lost control over the people? The better way, of course, was to give up the reins of Government, if the people were not amenable to discipline and reason.

To retaliate against the relatives of the co-religionists of the wrong-doer was a cowardly act. If they indulged in such acts, they should say good-bye to Independence.

"I went on spare, milkless diet, principally for reasons of health soon after coming to Calcutta. The happenings in the country induced me to prolong it. Now, Bihar will send me to complete fast if things do not radically mend," he wrote in a letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on Sunday the 4th. "There will be no time limit. Do not agitate yourself, but be really glad that I feel I have the strength to go through the ordeal and live up to my creed."

On the following day, in a letter to Pandit Jawaharlal, he wrote :

"The news from Bihar has shaken me. My own duty seems to me to be clear. A deep bond unites me with Bihar. How can I forget that? If even half of what one hears is true, it shows that Bihar has forgotten humanity. To blame it all on the *goondas* would be an untruth. Although I have striven hard to avert a fast, I can do so no longer... My inner voice tells me : 'You may not live to be a witness to this senseless slaughter. If people refuse to see what is clear as daylight and pay no heed to what you say, does it not mean that your day is over?' The logic of the argument is driving me irresistibly towards a fast. I, therefore, propose to issue a statement that unless this orgy of madness ceases, I must go on a fast unto death. The fast may have to be delayed for some time. When you asked me at Delhi about it, I had replied that I was not thinking of it at the time.

All that has now changed. You can strive with me, if you think differently. Whatever you say will carry weight with me. But knowing as you do my temperament, I am sure you will approve of my proposed step. In any event, you will go on with your work without a moment's thought about my possible death and leave me in God's good care. No worry allowed."

But neither Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru nor the Sardar, to whom he had caused a copy of the letter to be sent, tried to dissuade him. They understood better the magnitude of the stake. It was nothing less than India's Independence.

Pandit Jawaharlal sent him word from Patna over the telephone that he did not think it was necessary for him (Gandhiji) to go to Bihar at present. He added that his (Panditji's) own place was in Bihar rather than in Delhi. "I am going to stay on here as long as it may be necessary." On the morning of the 6th, just before he was leaving for Noakhali, Gandhiji issued the statement foreshadowed in the letter to Pandit Nehru.*

—*Harijan* : November 17, 1946.

123. SETTING THE CLOCK BACKWARD

I have heard it said that the retaliation in Bihar has 'cooled' the Muslims down. They mean it has cowed them

* In a statement on Nov. 6, 1946 entitled *To Bihar*, Gandhiji said :

"Bihar of my dreams seems to have falsified them... I do not need to be told that I must not condemn the whole of Bihar for the sake of the sins of a few thousand Biharis. Does not Bihar take credit for one Brij Kishore Prasad or one Rajendra Babu? I am afraid if the misconduct in Bihar continues, all the Hindus of India will be condemned by the world... I regard myself as a part of you. Your affection has compelled that loyalty in me. And since I claim to have better appreciation than you seem to have shown of what the Bihari Hindus should do, I cannot rest till I have done some measure of penance. Predominantly for the reasons of health, I had put myself on the lowest diet possible soon after my reaching Calcutta. That diet now continues as a penance after the knowledge of the Bihar tragedy. The low diet will become a fast unto death, if the erring Biharis have not turned over a new leaf."

—*Harijan* : November 10, 1946.

down for the time being. They do not know, Bihar has set the clock of Indian independence backward. The independence of India is today at stake in Bengal and Bihar. The British Government entrusted the Congress with power at the Centre not because they were in love with the Congress, but because they had faith that the Congress would use it wisely and well. Today Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru finds the ground slipping from under his feet. But he won't let that happen. That is why he is in Bihar. He has said he is going to stay there as long as it may be necessary.

Use your arms well, if you must. Do not ill-use them. Bihar has not used its arms well... It is the privilege of arms to protect the weak and the helpless.

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. I, p. 368.

124. 'THAT IS JAWAHARLAL!'

To persuade Gandhiji to disengage himself from Noakhali and return to Delhi, where his presence and advice were badly needed, the Congress leaders decided to meet Gandhiji and have consultation with him.

The party arrived at about midnight (Dec. 27, 1946). Gandhiji had then been already asleep for two hours. By the time some of the guests were ready to go to bed, Gandhiji got out of his to face the day at half-past two. With his characteristic delicacy in regard to the little graces of life, which never deserted him even in the most trying circumstances, he had given minute instructions about the arrangements to be made for the accommodation and convenience of the guests. He used to carry with him wherever he went a few essential articles of personal daily use like a hand-basin, a commode etc., so as not to inconvenience his hosts. He had them all sent to Pandit Nehru's hut to make things a bit easier for him. But Pandit Nehru, when he came to know of it, would not hear of it and hauled poor Manu over live-coals for Gandhiji to put himself to inconvenience.

"Bapu gave orders, what could I do?" Manu protested.

"Then, you should have disobeyed," replied Pandit Nehru with affected sternness. As she still hesitated, he added :

"You could tell him that Jawaharlal forbade you. Such orders are not to be obeyed even though he slaughters you. But, do not be scared, he won't!" he added with a merry twinkle and kindly affectionate laugh to set the frightened girl at her ease.

"That is Jawaharlal; so let it be," remarked Gandhiji when the incident was reported to him next morning. And so the hand-basin, the commode and the other little things came back unused and were reinstalled as before in Gandhiji's improvised little bathroom.

Eager crowds of both Hindus and Muslims from the surrounding villages besieged the place during the stay of the visitors from Delhi. They even broke through the cordon and swarmed into Gandhiji's prayer *phandal*.

"So, this is your lone sojourn!" Pandit Nehru twitted Gandhiji.

"You forget I am a *Mahatma*, too!" replied Gandhiji with a hearty laugh.

They, then, proceeded to discuss business. Pandit Nehru narrated to Gandhiji how the rift between the Congress and the League had been widening since his departure from Delhi; how the League had, by its obstructionist tactics in the Interim Government, managed to put off, till the ensuing budget session, the announcement about the abolition of the Salt Tax, which had been decided upon before the League came into the Interim Government; how these tactics had brought about a condition nearing a stalemate in the Cabinet and had led the Congress members of the Interim Government to give Lord Wavell notice of resignation; how Lord Wavell, on the other hand, was using the stalemate as an argument for making further concessions to the Muslim League and for asking the Congress to form Coalition Government even in the Provinces; in other words, to plant a "King's Party" in the Cabinet of every Congress Province. Gandhiji, on his part, explained to Pandit Nehru the technique of non-violence which he was pursuing in Noakhali. The I.N.A. people had come to him to offer their services. But he had insisted on their first obtaining written permission from the Chief Minister of Bengal to work in Noakhali.

"There you are perfectly right," Pandit Nehru remarked. "Otherwise, they might think you want to overwhelm them by importing Sikhs from outside."

"My viewpoint is," resumed Gandhiji, "that if they give the permission, we are the gainers. If they won't, we are gainers still. Come what may, I shall never play false or deceive the League."

"I quite agree; but how many of us here are today prepared to follow your strict code?" interposed Pandit Nehru.

"All the more reason why I should," rejoined Gandhiji.

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase : Vol. I, p. 478.*

125. 'YOUR AFFECTION IS EXTRAORDINARY'

Pandit Nehru's plea with Gandhiji to return to Delhi did not succeed. The only record of their conversation in that regard is to be found in a cryptic entry in Gandhiji's diary under the date 30th December, 1946 : "Jawaharlal had about ten minutes' talk before leaving. It was to the effect that I ought to be with them at Delhi." A personal note to Pandit Nehru, which he scribbled at 3 o'clock that morning, ran :

"Your affection is extraordinary and so natural. Come again, when you wish, or send someone who understands you and will faithfully interpret my reactions... when, in your opinion, consultation is necessary and you cannot come. Nor is it seemly that you should often run to me even though I claim to be like a wise father to you, having no less love towards you than Motilalji.

"Do not depart from the spirit of the draft you showed me yesterday... Somehow or other, I feel that my judgment about the communal problems and the political situation is true. I have no doubt now about the wisdom of what I had said in Delhi, when the Working Committee accepted the Cabinet Mission's statement. This does not mean that what was done by the Working Committee should not have been done. On the contrary, I had completely associated myself with all that the Working Committee did. I could not support with reason what I had felt so vaguely.

"This time, it is quite different. My reason wholly supports my heart. I notice daily verification. So, I suggest frequent consultation with an old, tried servant of the nation."

On the morning of the 30th December, 1946, at half-past seven, Pandit Nehru and party left Srirampur. Ghandhiji accompanied them as far as the end of his walk and there bade them farewell. The party reached the nearby village of Madhupur on foot and from there were taken to Feni aerodrome by jeep.

"It is always a pleasure and inspiration," remarked Pandit Nehru to Press representatives at Delhi, "to meet this young man of seventy-seven. We always feel a little younger and stronger after meeting him and the burdens we carry seem a little lighter."

—*M. Gandhi — The Last Phase* : Vol. I, p. 483.

126. FIRST SERVANT OF THE CONGRESS

Q. Why did Pandit Jawaharlal go to Bihar and take such an active part in putting down disturbances there, while he did nothing for Bengal? If the Interim Government could not interfere in one Province because of Provincial Autonomy, how could it do so in another?

A. We must not forget that besides being the Vice-President of the Interim Government, Jawaharlal is the first servant of the Congress. As the Vice-President of the Central Cabinet, he must act within the four corners of the Constitution. It does not permit interference with Provincial Autonomy. But in Bihar, Pandit Nehru and Rajendra Babu have a standing and responsibility as Congressmen.

—*Harijan* : January 12, 1947.

127. CROWNING ACT OF MY LIFE

Dr. Chakravarty : That Bengal should be chosen for this great task, that you should have made this your centre, is to us a supreme privilege though people have suffered and

are suffering beyond description. The whole of Bengal is conscious of your arrival and of the fact that you have come to live and work with the suffering men and women who need you so much at this hour.

Gandhiji : For me, if this thing is pulled through, it will be the crowning act of my life. I had to come down to the soil and to the people of East Bengal. The first person to whom I mentioned this was Jawaharlal. Without a moment's hesitation he replied : 'Yes, your place is there. Although we need you so much here, we need you more in Noakhali.' I asked him : 'When ?' 'As soon as you feel like it,' he replied. In two days, I started.

—*Harijan* : January 12, 1947.

128. MR. ATTLEE'S DECLARATION

Giving his first reaction to H.M.G.'s statement, *Gandhiji* wrote to Pandit Nehru on the 24th February, 1947 :

"Evidently, I had anticipated practically the whole of it... My interpretation of the speech (of Mr. Attlee) is this :

1. Independence will be recognized of those parts which desire it and will do without British protection ;
2. The British will remain where they are wanted ;
3. This may lead to Pakistan for those Provinces or portions which may want it. No one will be forced one way or the other. The Congress Provinces, if they are wise, will get what they want ;
4. Much will depend upon what the Constituent Assembly will do and what you as the Interim Government are able to do ;
5. If the British Government are and able to remain sincere, the declaration is good. Otherwise, it is dangerous."

In other words, the future would depend on India's capacity to take up the challenge of independence in terms of the 'Quit India' Resolution for which *Gandhiji* had been trying to prepare them, and of the British Power's willingness to

retire unconditionally, leaving India to her fate, and its capacity to get the services to implement that decision loyally and impartially in letter and in spirit.

On the same day on which Gandhiji wrote to Pandit Nehru, Pandit Nehru wrote to Gandhiji from New Delhi :

"You must have seen my statement on the new declaration made by the British Government. The statement was considered carefully by all our colleagues in the Interim Government minus, of course, the Muslim Leaguers... Mr. Attlee's statement contains much that is indefinite and likely to give trouble. But I am convinced that it is, in the final analysis, a brave and definite statement. It meets our oft-repeated demand for quitting India... Matters will move swiftly now or, at any rate, after Mountbatten comes... The Working Committee is meeting on the 5th March... Your advice at this critical moment would help us greatly. But you are too far away for consultation and you refuse to move out of East Bengal. Still, if you could convey to us your ideas on the subject, we would be very grateful."

In his next letter on 28th February, 1947, Pandit Nehru wrote :

"The Working Committee is meeting here soon and all of us were anxious to have you here on the occasion. We considered the question of sending you a joint telegram, appealing to you to come. But we decided ultimately not to send it. We felt sure that you would not come at this stage and our telegram would only be an embarrassment.

"But though we are not sending the telegram, we feel very strongly that your advice during the coming critical weeks is most necessary. It is possible, of course, for one or two of us to visit you, but that is not a satisfactory way of doing things. It is a full discussion among all of us that we would have liked to have. At present, it is exceedingly difficult for any of us to leave Delhi, even for two or three days. For several to go together would upset work completely. There is the budget in the Assembly, the Committee of the Constituent Assembly, the negotiations with the Princes, the change in Viceroys

and so many other things that demand constant attention. So we cannot go away and if you will not come, how are we to meet?"

But Gandhiji literally believed in the dictum that one can serve the whole Universe by doing one's allotted task steadfastly and well, and that it is better for one to die in the performance of one's own immediate duty than to allow oneself to be lured away by the prospect of the "distant scene," however attractive.

Gandhiji's persistent refusal to come to Delhi, till his mission in Noakhali had borne fruit, created a dilemma for the Congress leaders. It was vividly expressed in one of Pandit Nehru's letters :

"I know that we must learn to rely upon ourselves and not run to you for help on every occasion. But we have got into this bad habit and we do often feel that if you had been easier of access, our difficulties would have been less."

But Gandhiji's position remained unchanged :

"I know that if I were free, I could take my share in trying to solve the various problems that arise in our country. But I feel that I should be useless unless I could do something here. . . . We are all in the hands of the Power which we call God."

In the end, it was neither his nor Pandit Nehru's will that prevailed but, as he had put it to Pandit Nehru, "the Power which we call God." He was decreed to be neither in Noakhali nor in Delhi, but in Bihar.

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. I, pp. 565-68.

129. 'OMIT ME FROM YOUR CONSIDERATION'

*New Delhi,
11th April, 1947.*

Gandhiji to Lord Mountbatten :

"I had several short talks with Pandit Nehru and an hour's talk with him alone; and then with several members

of the Working Committee last night about the formula* I had sketched before you and which I had filled in for them with all the implications. I am sorry to say that I failed to carry any of them with me except Badshah Khan.

"I do not know that having failed to carry both the head and heart of Pandit Nehru with me, I would have wanted to carry the matter further. But Panditji was so good that he would not be satisfied until the whole plan was discussed with the few members of the Congress Working Committee who were present. I felt sorry that I could not convince them of the correctness of my plan, from every point of view. Nor could they dislodge me from my position, although I had not

* The following is an outline of the plan which Gandhiji put before the Viceroy :

1. Mr. Jinnah to be given the option of forming a Cabinet.
2. The selection of the Cabinet is left entirely to Mr. Jinnah. The members may be all Muslims, or all non-Muslims, or they may be representatives of all classes and creeds of the Indian people.
3. If Mr. Jinnah accepted this offer, the Congress would guarantee to co-operate freely and sincerely, so long as all measures that Mr. Jinnah's Cabinet bring forward are in the interests of the Indian people as a whole.
4. The sole referee of what is or is not in the interests of India as a whole will be Lord Mountbatten, in his personal capacity.
5. Mr. Jinnah must stipulate, on behalf of the League or of any other parties represented in the Cabinet formed by him that, so far as he or they are concerned, they will do their utmost to preserve peace throughout India.
6. There shall be no National Guards or any other form of private army.
7. Within the framework hereof, Mr. Jinnah will be perfectly free to present for acceptance a scheme of Pakistan even before the transfer of power, provided however that he is successful in his appeal to reason and not to the force of arms, which he abjures for all time for this purpose. Thus, there will be no compulsion in this matter over a Province or a part thereof.
8. In the Assembly, the Congress has a decisive majority. But the Congress shall never use that majority against the League policy simply because of its identification with the League but will give its hearty support to every measure brought forward by the League Government, provided that it is in the interest of the whole of India. Whether it is in such interest or not shall be decided by Lord Mountbatten as man, and not in his representative capacity.
9. If Mr. Jinnah rejects this offer, the same offer to be made *mutatis mutandis* to Congress.

—M. Gandhi—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 79.

closed my mind against every argument. Thus, I have to ask you to omit me from your consideration.

"Congressmen who are in the Interim Government are stalwarts, seasoned servants of the nation, and, therefore, so far as the Congress point of view is concerned, they will be complete advisers.

"I would still love to take the place that the late C. F. Andrews took. He represented no one but himself. And if you ever need my service on its merit, it will be always at your disposal.

"In the circumstances above mentioned, subject to your consent, I propose, if possible, to leave tomorrow for Patna."

—M. Gandhi—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 84

130. ASIAN INSTITUTE

Dr. Han Liwu from China asked Gandhiji his views on the proposal to set up an Asian Institute. Gandhiji replying said :

The question is certainly very nice. Let me confess my ignorance. I have really to apologize to you. Pandit Nehru had asked me long before this Conference* was scheduled to take place, whether it would at all be possible for me to attend it. It has proved to be a much more important conference than it was expected to be. I was obliged to say at that time that I was very sorry and would not be able to come. When Lord Mountbatten, the new Viceroy, invited me to meet him, however, I could not say 'No.' It would have been foreign to my nature to do so. The Viceroy had already told me that the credit for bringing me to Delhi during the Asian Conference was really his. And I told the Viceroy : 'I am your prisoner. But I am also Pandit Nehru's prisoner, for, after all, he is your Vice-President.'

Through correspondence I know almost all parts of the world and naturally, therefore, of Asia, though I know very few of you personally—perhaps none of you. I am doubtful whether I can say anything useful, but the question is one after my heart. Some portions of the question put to me

* Inter-Asian Relations Conference, Delhi.

now were discussed by Pandit Nehru yesterday. It is a great event that for the first time in our history such a conference takes place on the Indian soil. I am sorry that I have to refer to the conditions that we see today. We do not know how to keep peace between ourselves. We have so many differences, which we cannot settle between ourselves in a humane and friendly manner. We think we must resort to the law of the jungle. It is an experience which I would not like you to carry to your respective countries. I would instead like you to bury it here.

India is now on the eve of her full independence. India wants to be independent of everybody who wants to own this country. We do not want a change of masters. We want to be masters on our own soil, though I am not quite sure how it will come about. All that we know is that we should do our duty and leave the results in the hands of God, and not in the hands of man. Man is supposed to be the maker of his own destiny. It is partly true. He can make his destiny only in so far as he is allowed by the Great Power which overrides all our intentions, all our plans and carries out His own plans.

I call that Great Power not by the name of *Allah*, not by the name of *Khuda* or God, but by the name of Truth. For me, Truth is God and Truth overrides all our plans. The whole truth is only embodied within the heart of that Great Power—Truth. I was taught from my early days to regard Truth as unapproachable—something that you cannot reach. A great Englishman taught me to believe that God is unknowable. He is knowable, but knowable only to the extent that our limited intellect allows.

You, gentlemen, have come here from different parts of Asia, and having come with eagerness and zest you should all have yearly meetings or two-yearly or three-yearly conferences. You should carry away sweet memories of the meetings and make every effort to build the great edifice of Truth.

All the Asian representatives have come together. Is it in order to wage a war against Europe, against America or against non-Asiatics? I say most emphatically 'No.' This is not India's mission. I am free to confess that I will feel extremely sorry if India, having won independence through

essentially and predominantly non-violent means, was going to use that independence for the suppression of the other parts of the world. Europeans had exploited different races inhabiting this vast continent called Asia.

It will be a sorry thing if we go away from this Conference without a fixed determination that Asia shall live and live as free as every other Western nation. I just wanted to say that conferences like the present should meet regularly, and if you ask me where, India is the place.

—*Harijan* : April 20, 1947.

131. JAWAHARLAL'S DREAM OF UNITED ASIA

Referring to the Conference that was then being held, Gandhiji said :

It is a big thing and our jewel, Jawaharlal, is very beloved of the delegates because of his love for them and his dream of a United Asia. Only, however, if India is true to her traditions can she be worthy of the role she ought to play. It would be cruel to spoil Jawaharlal's dream of a United Asia by internal strife in this land.

—*Harijan* : April 20, 1947.

132. I AM A PRISONER OF NEHRU

Addressing a prayer gathering on April 12, 1947, Gandhiji said :

I am returning to Bihar because of my work in Delhi is over for the time being. I have told you I am a prisoner both of the Viceroy and Pandit Nehru. My talks with the former are over for the time being, and Jawaharlal is too big to restrain me from going where I think my duty lies. I am a worshipper of the *Gita* and the *Gita* says that it is best at all times to do one's duty in one's own field, no matter how big any work outside that field may seemingly appear.

—*Harijan* : April 27, 1947.

133. A FALSE REPORT

Gandhiji referred with pain to the publication of a report in a responsible newspaper, purporting to say that he was leaving because he had quarrelled with the Working Committee. He said :

The statement is completely wrong. All the members of the Working Committee who were in Delhi on that day had been with me for an hour a short time before. Our discussions are always carried on in the spirit of love, whatever differences of opinion there might be. Why should I ask the permission of the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to leave Delhi, if I had quarrelled with either of them ?

When the Sardar asked me when I was returning, I had at once replied : 'Whenever you send for me.' It is, therefore, wholly wrong on the part of newspapers to give out false news and unnecessarily agitate people's minds and deceive or mislead them. Unfortunately, newspapers have become more important to the average man than the scriptures. I would fain advise you to give up reading newspapers. You will lose nothing by so doing, whereas real food for your minds and spirit lies in the scriptures and other good literature.

The Press is called the Fourth Estate. It is definitely a power, but to misuse that power is criminal. I am a journalist myself and would appeal to fellow journalists to realize their responsibility and to carry on their work with no idea other than that of upholding the truth. If they wanted to put out such news, surely it was their duty to go to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru or to me. That would have been honourable.

—*Harijan* : April 27, 1947.

134. WHEN EVERYTHING AT THE TOP GOES WRONG

Q. When everything at the top goes wrong, can the goodness of the people at the bottom assert itself against its mischievous influence ?

A. If the people at the top go wrong, it is certainly open to, and it is the duty of those at the bottom, to remove the wrong top, even as I would remove an umbrella which appears to be at the top but which is sustained by me.

Thus, Pandit Nehru is at the top. But, in reality, he is sustained by us. If he goes wrong, those at the bottom could remove him without trouble. Coming nearer home, if we found Suhrawardy Saheb (the Bengal Premier) to be unworthy, we at the bottom could certainly remove him, not by physical force but by the way I have had the honour of putting before you. The argument that he is elected by the Muslim voters is besides the point.

It all boils down to the fact that if the people at the bottom are ignorant, they would be exploited. Such was the case with the English. When people realized their strength and the fact that the bottom sustains the top, it would be well with them. Therefore, I would say that if the top is wrong, there is something radically wrong with the bottom. Let us, therefore, dispel our ignorant helplessness.

—*Harijan* : May 25, 1947.

135. 'MY LIFE'S WORK SEEMS TO BE OVER'

With Partition practically a foregone conclusion, Gandhiji looked weighed down by care. "My life's work seems to be over," he sadly remarked. "I hope God will spare me further humiliation."

On the following morning, the 1st June, 1947, mistaking the hands of his watch, he woke up earlier than usual. As there was still half an hour before prayer, he remained lying in bed and began to muse in a low voice :

"The purity of my striving will be put to the test only now. Today, I find myself all alone. Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to return if Partition is agreed upon.... They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be Partition, it should not be through British intervention or under the British rule.... They wonder if I have

not deteriorated with age.... Nevertheless, I must speak as I feel, if I am to prove a true and loyal friend to the Congress and to the British people, as I claim to be... regardless of whether my advice is appreciated or not. I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I pray that God may not keep me alive to witness it. In order that He may give me the strength and wisdom to remain firm in the midst of universal opposition and to utter the full truth, I need all the strength that... purity... can give."

He continued :

"But in spite of my being all alone in my thoughts, I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God Himself is lighting my path before me. And that is perhaps the reason why I am able to fight on single-handed. People ask me to retire to Kashi or to the Himalayas. I laugh and tell them that the Himalayas of my penance are where there is misery to be alleviated, oppression to be relieved. There can be no rest for me so long as there is a single person in India lacking the necessities of life... I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief.... His inner agony wrings my heart. But, if I gave way to tears, it would be cowardly and, the stalwart Pathan as he is, he would break down. So, I go about my business unmoved. That is no small thing."

"But may be," he added after a pause, "all of them are right and I alone am floundering in darkness." The oppression of the impending division of India seemed to be weighing on him.

With a final effort he concluded :

"I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old soul went through thinking of it. *Let it not be said that Gandhi was party to India's vivisection.* But everybody is today impatient for independence. Therefore, there is no other help." Using a well-known Gujarati metaphor, he likened independence-cum-partition to a "wooden loaf." "If they (the Congress leaders) eat it, they die of colic ; if they leave it, they starve !"

"In all probability, the final seal will be set on the Partition plan during the day." Gandhiji remarked as he lay in his bath that day (June 3, 1947). "But though I may be alone in holding this view, I repeat that the division of India can only do harm to the country's future. The slavery of 150 years is going to end, but from the look of things it does not seem as if the independence will last as long. It hurts me to think that just as God blinded my vision, so that I mistook the non-violence of the weak—which I now see is a misnomer and contradiction in terms—for true non-violence, He has again stricken me with blindness. If it should prove to be so, nobody would be happier than I."

—*M. Gandhi*—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 215.

136 QUALITY OF DISCIPLINE

Commenting on the quality of discipline required in a free people, Gandhiji instanced that of the English people. He related the well-known story of Queen Victoria when, at the age of seventeen, she was awakened one night to be told that she was the Queen of England. The young girl was naturally agitated and overawed at the terrible responsibility thrown on her by God. The old Prime Minister, as he knelt before the Queen, consoled her. She merely said that she would be good. It was the disciplined people of England who helped her to govern.

Proceeding further, he said :

"Today I want you to realize that independence is at our door. The Viceroy is only the nominal head of the Cabinet. We would help him by expecting no help from him in the governance of the country. Our uncrowned king is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He is working, slaving for us, not as a king but as our first servant. It is his desire through the service of India to serve the world. Jawaharlal is an international figure and he has friendly relations with all the foreign ambassadors who are now in India. But it is not possible for Jawaharlal alone to govern, if the people by their indiscipline spoiled the work. He could not, as did the former autocrats, resort to the

rule of the sword. That would be neither *Panchayat Raj* nor *Jawahar Raj*. It is, therefore, the duty of everyone to make the task of the Ministers easy, and not force their hands in any way."

Then, Gandhiji reminded the audience how a year ago Pandit Jawaharlal had gone to Kashmir when he was badly needed in Delhi, and how at the bidding of the Maulana Saheb, the then President of the Congress, he had returned to Delhi.

"Today, Panditji is talking of wanting to go to Kashmir again. His heart is sore because the leader of the Kashmiris, Sheikh Abdulla Saheb, is still in prison. But I feel that Panditji's presence here is more necessary and so I have offered to go in his place. There are many things to be considered before I am permitted by Jawaharlal to go. If I go, I will even from there serve Bihar and Bengal as if I am bodily in one of the Provinces."

—*Harijan*: June 8, 1947.

137. OUR DUTY

Asking the people of India to turn the search-light inwards, Gandhiji said that they were perfectly entitled to praise or blame the Congress or the League according to the dictates of their intelligence and conscience. That was the right of the people. They must from then onwards think in terms of *Panchayat Raj*.

"I have called Pandit Jawaharlal the uncrowned king of India, but the real rulers are the toiling millions. Jawaharlal cannot be replaced today whilst the charge is being taken from Englishmen. He, a Harrow boy, Cambridge graduate and a barrister, is wanted to carry on negotiations with Englishmen.

"But a time is fast coming when India will have to elect its first President of the Republic that is coming. I would gladly have presented the late Chakrayya* as such, had he

*A Harijan youth from South India. He had joined Gandhiji's Ashram as a youngster and it was his ambition to serve the Harijans in his own village. Suddenly he developed symptoms

lived. I would rejoice to think that we had a *mehtar* girl of stout heart, incorruptible and of crystal-like purity to be our first President. It is no vain dream. There are such Harijan girls, if we would but set our hearts on having rustic Presidents. Such a girl could be assisted in the discharge of her duties by a person like Pandit Nehru, who could act as her Secretary or Chief Minister. Our Presidents of the future would not be required to know English. They would have as their counsellors wise patriots, knowing the necessary foreign languages and the art of true statesmanship. Such dreams can only be realized, if we cease sanguinary fratricide and turn our attention towards our villages."

—*Harijan* : June 15, 1947.

138. HOME-TRUTHS TO COMMUNISTS

On June 8, 1947, giving a bit of his mind to a group of Communists who saw him, Gandhiji told them to put their 'ism' behind them and think in terms of the concrete problems facing the country... and co-operate in their solution without any mental reservation or desire to make political capital out of it. Proceeding further, he said :

You waste your time and energy in hair-splitting, fault-finding and picking holes. If you discover a trifling flaw any-

of what looked like epilepsy and was later diagnosed to be a case of brain tumour. He was a believer in Nature-cure. But Gandhiji saw that Nature-cure would not help in his case and advised a major operation. Half an hour before going to the operation theatre, Chakrayya wrote to an inmate of the Ashram : "I was very despondent, but now my despondency is gone. One feels happy to go to see the earthly father. How much happier one must feel at the thought of going to see the Father in Heaven? I am no more afraid of death. I am prepared to meet it with joy in the heart." Young Chakrayya died taking God's name till his last conscious moment.

In a letter to the Ashram, after Chakrayya's death, Gandhiji wrote : "I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that one who is a devotee of God, valiant and servant of the nation, is fit to be the first President of Free India. As early as 1917 to 1918. I said in a public speech that so long as a shoe-maker or a sweeper did not become the President of India, I for one would not be satisfied."

—*M. Gandhi*—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, pp. 227-28.

where—real or fancied—you exploit it to make propaganda and spread disaffection against the Government in power, without even caring to make a proper inquiry. It seems to have become your stock-in-trade. Is there no activity of the present Government whatever, which is worthy of your co-operation, or which you can approve of?

Think for a moment what you would do if you were in Pandit Nehru's place. Either you should be prepared to shoulder the responsibility which Pandit Nehru and the Sardar are shouldering, or you should co-operate with them. I undertake that they will vacate office and make room for you, the moment you are prepared to take charge of the administration and run it. It will do you good. But if you will do neither, you should at least refrain from indulging in untruthful propaganda. You profess lofty principles, but your conduct belies them because you seem to make no distinction between truth and falsehood, justice and injustice. What to me is even more pathetic is that you regard Russia as your spiritual home. Despising Indian culture, you dream of planting the Russian system here. Food, however rich, that another person eats, cannot sustain me. I can be sustained only by what I eat. In the same way, what an outside Power does, gives me no satisfaction as it seems to give you.

You should claim to be the servants of the country. As such, it is upto you to shed narrow party-feeling and show a spirit of co-operation with all those who have the good of the country at heart, so that India might once more attain the pinnacle of greatness which she once held in the world.

You are to me all like my own children. I tell you these home-truths because you allow me to do so. I have spoken from the depth of my heart.

—M. Gandhi—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 236.

139. TWO NATIONS?

In the course of his post-prayer speech on June 12, 1947, Gandhiji said :

The division of India is now a certainty so far as man can see. I ask you not to grieve over it. I have never believed

in Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's two-nations theory and never will. Change of religion can never change nationality. I am as much of Pakistan as of Hindustan. If we act in like manner, Jinnah Saheb will not be able to prove his theory in spite of the geographical division of India.

Does the re-adjustment of the geography of India mean two nations? I admit that the division having been agreed upon, unity becomes somewhat difficult. But assuming that the Muslims of India look upon themselves as a nation distinct from the rest, they cannot become so, if the non-Muslims do not respond. The Muslim majority areas may call themselves Pakistan, but the rest and the largest part of India need not call itself Hindustan. In contradiction to Pakistan, it will mean the abode of the Hindus. Do the Hindus feel so? Have the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews born in India and the Anglo-Indians who do not happen to have the white skin, any other home than India? I will omit the Muslims for the time being. I suppose such is the reason why Pandit Jawaharlal refuses to call the non-Pakistan areas as Hindustan and loves to call them by the proud name of the Union of Indian Republics, from which some Muslim majority areas have seceded. History has shown that possession of proud names does not make the possessors great. Men and groups are known not by what they call themselves, but their deeds.

—*Harijan* : June 22, 1947.

140. TRANSPARENT AS CRYSTAL

At midday on the 14th June, 1947, Pandit Nehru came to inform Gandhiji that he would be called upon to address the A.-I.C.C. in the evening.

"He is transparent as crystal," remarked Gandhiji after Pandit Nehru had left. "His loyalty and affection are beyond compare. With all the ideological fights that he has had with me in the past, today he takes everything from me implicitly. He would be heart-broken if I said 'no' to him. He has made me captive of his love. That is why I have proclaimed from the housetops that I am Pandit Nehru's and the Sardar's prisoner.

"He combines with the heart of a child a towering intellect, wide learning and an ability which can stand comparison with any in the world. He has renunciation, too. He is quite capable of laying aside all the trappings of power as easily as a snake does its outworn skin. His tireless energy puts even the youth to shame."

—M. Gandhi — *The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 251.

141. CHOICE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Criticism has reached my ears in regard to the fact that while the Quaid-e-Azam has been appointed the Governor-General of Pakistan, the Congress leaders have agreed to keep Lord Mountbatten on as the Governor-General of India. It has been hinted that the leaders have weakened and, by asking Lord Mountbatten to stay on, have shown that they are still dependent on England. I wish to ask such critics to rid their minds of such suspicion. Can they imagine men like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Sardar, a born fighter, ever bowing the knees or boot-licking anyone? I want them to know that after August 15th, it is within our power to ask anyone to become our Governor-General. If it had been my choice, I might even have chosen a Harijan girl. But I have no wish to deceive them in refusing to suspect Lord Mountbatten's appointment. After all, we could always fight him if he proved false to us. It is now known through the newspapers that, in the first instance, both India and Pakistan had agreed to have Lord Mountbatten as their common Governor-General. But, at the last moment, Jinnah Sahab had changed his mind and nominated himself. The Congress leaders could have then done likewise, but they did not like to go back on their plighted word. I sense nothing wrong in this. Lord Mountbatten would be on trial in his new job, in spite of the fact that he would be the constitutional head of the Government. I hope that he would come through the test with flying colours by being our servant, which is what the appointment stands for. We would be foolish to imagine that no Englishman could ever be a friend of India and loyal to her, or that Lord Mountbatten would not be a servant of the Indian Union because

he is of royal blood and because now his nephew is going to marry the future Queen of England. We should never mistrust anyone until and unless he proves himself unworthy.

—*Harijan* : July 20, 1947.

142. CORRESPONDENCE ON KASHMIR VISIT

The leaders of the Kashmir National Conference were anxious for Pandit Nehru to pay them a visit. But as Maharaja Hari Singh still objected to Pandit Nehru's going to Kashmir, Gandhiji wrote to Lord Mountbatten to ask whether the Maharaja would be agreeable to his (Gandhiji's) or Sardar Patel's going in place of Pandit Nehru. If loss of face was what really mattered, there was a way out :

"Panditji was with me... I gave him the report of the conversation about Kashmir.... I share his anxiety that the matter brooks no delay. For him it is one of personal honour. I have simply undertaken to replace him to the best of my ability. I would like to free him from anxiety in this matter."

Lord Mountbatten wrote to the Maharaja on the same day, advising him to agree to Gandhiji's visit :

"I have had a talk with both Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, who are both still anxious to visit Kashmir. I pointed out to them that any visit from a big Congress leader, in which speeches were made, could not fail to cause the League to send speakers of the order of Mr. Jinnah to counter their propaganda. This would, in effect, produce the electioneering atmosphere which you so rightly wish to avoid, since, as you pointed out to me, there has been no bloodshed up to date and only violent political speeches could now bring about this bloodshed.

"Mr. Gandhi tells me that Pandit Nehru is prepared to forego his visit if he (Mr. Gandhi) goes instead. I am, therefore, writing this at Mr. Gandhi's request (and dictating it in his presence) to suggest that you should agree to his visit in the near future and make things as easy as possible for him. He has given me his firm

assurance that he will make no political speeches or carry on any form of propaganda...."

But even this "firm" assurance on Gandhiji's part and Lord Mountbatten's persuasion could not reconcile the Maharaja to the proposed visit.

Maharaja Hari Singh to Lord Mountbatten :

8th July, 1947.

"I would say that it would be advisable from all points of view for Mahatma Gandhi to cancel his projected visit to Kashmir this year. If, however, for reasons of his own he is not in a position to do so, I should still say that his visit should take place only towards the end of the autumn... I would, however, again strongly advise that he or any other political leader should not visit the State until the conditions in India take a happier turn."

This letter was not received in Delhi till the 11th July. Worried by the absence of any news for a fortnight, Gandhiji again wrote to Lord Mountbatten on the 11th July :

"I am still without any news from Kashmir... If I was not bound by any promise made to you, of course, I would not want any permission to go to Kashmir. I would simply go as any private person."

Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji :

12th July, 1947.

"Thank you for your letter of the 11th, which by a coincidence arrived the same day as the reply from the Maharaja of Kashmir which I enclose. He reiterates the views he so strongly expressed to me when I was in Kashmir and which I passed on to you : 'A tiny spark, in spite of the best intentions in the world, may set alight a conflagration which it would be impossible to control.'"

"As I told you, the Maharaja was strongly opposed to any Muslim League leader coming to Kashmir, and I had asked Mr. Jinnah not to go or send anyone. I understand that you contemplated a visit to Noakhali."

Would you like to return to the charge and urge acceptance of your visit immediately after the Noakhali visit, or do you feel it is urgent that you should go before?"

Gandhiji talked the matter over with Pandit Nehru, and conveyed Pandit Nehru's reaction to the Viceroy on the 16th July :

"I had a long talk with Panditji about Kashmir. He is firmly of opinion that I should go in any case, not minding if Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah or his deputy goes after my visit. He thinks, and I agree, that if now my visit is postponed, it will disappoint many persons in Kashmir. That I may not be allowed to see Sheikh Abdullah Saheb should not affect the contemplated visit one way or the other. In the circumstances, I suggest that you should telegraph to the Maharaja Saheb that as my visit would not mean any speeches or public meetings, it should not cause any embarrassment to the State and that I would go to Kashmir at the earliest possible moment.

"As I have said to you, my suggestion is subject to your wish not to interfere with Panditji's wishes in the matter. If, for any reason you wish otherwise, I would not go. Finally, I should add that if for any reason I do not go to Kashmir, most probably Panditji would want to go for two or three days, though he would prefer my going."

Mountbatten had in the meantime invited the Princes to Delhi for a discussion on the question of accession. He was loath to take any step which might have the effect of jeopardising the outcoming of the forthcoming discussions.

Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji :

17th July, 1947.

"As I told you in our talk, I will entirely agree to anything you want, and offer my services to facilitate your visit. I am accordingly telegraphing to the Resident to pass on your proposal to visit Kashmir as a private person to the Maharaja.

"Since seeing you, I have received news that the Maharaja is sending his Prime Minister, Kak, to Delhi

early next week to join the discussions which I am arranging with the States Department. I feel it would be both courteous and wise if you and Pandit Nehru could have a talk with Pandit Kak before deciding on the precise date and details of your visit, as I personally rather fear that a visit of a man of such world-wide eminence as yourself can never be kept sufficiently private not to have some effect on the rather delicate negotiations, which I hope to conduct during that week.

"The last thing, however, I wish to do is to interfere in any way with your liberty of movement ; I only want to counsel a few more days' patience."

Gandhiji sent the Viceroy's letter to Pandit Nehru. Pandit Nehru at once wrote back that regard being had to the Viceroy's advice, the visit to Kashmir should be postponed till after Kak's arrival in Delhi.

But now another hitch arose. On the 27th night, Pandit Nehru saw Gandhiji and told him that Sardar Patel was opposed to his (Gandhiji's) going to Kashmir. That settled the matter for Gandhiji.

Gandhiji to Lord Mountbatten :

28th July, 1947.

"It is my silence day. Hence, this infliction in the shape of my hand-writing. Pandit Nehru told me last night that as there were hitches about my going to Kashmir, he had decided to go even if only for two or three days. . . You wanted me to see you before leaving. If the need is still felt, I am at your disposal tomorrow. You will then name the hour."

To Sardar Patel he wrote :

"Jawaharlal told me last night that you can approve of his going to Kashmir but not mine. He has, therefore, released me from the promise to go there. I, therefore, now propose to leave for Lahore. . . tomorrow. 30th, Lahore and Amritsar. From there, after a day, I take the train for Patna. If this is all right, let me have a line in approval so that I may make my arrangements accordingly."

In the meantime, Pandit Nehru also had written to Lord Mountbatten informing him that he proposed to go to Kashmir about the 4th August for 4 or 5 days. "I have not mentioned your name in this connection," he added in his note to Gandhiji informing him of this. It had instantaneous effect.

Lord Mountbatten to Gandhiji :

28th July, 1947.

"Pandit Kak told me he had given you his reasons why the Kashmir Government were so very anxious not to have the visit from a political leader... He told me after seeing you that although he feared even a visit from you might provoke violence, the fact that you were known to preach non-violence would reduce the risk in your case to less than half the risk if Pandit Nehru came.

"The last thing he asked me to tell you was that if you felt it was essential that either you or Pandit Nehru should go, then he would greatly prefer a visit from you, particularly as the papers had already announced your visit and the public were mentally prepared for it. May I, therefore, urge that you should suggest to Pandit Nehru that your visit at this moment would be better than a visit from him; for I really do not know how the future Prime Minister can be spared from Delhi with only 18 days left for him to take over."

But for once the stream-lined Mountbatten diplomacy misfired! His letter had exactly the opposite effect on Pandit Nehru.

Pandit Nehru to Gandhiji :

28th July, 1947.

"I have seen the Viceroy's letter... I am a little tired of hearing what Pandit Kak feels or thinks. I am not concerned with it. Indeed, I think that it would be normally right to do the opposite of what he advises. For many months—ever since Mountbatten came—this question of your going or mine has been discussed and postponed. I have had enough of this business. This is not my way of doing anything. I hardly remem-

ber anything that has exasperated me quite so much as this affair... I shall go ahead with my plans. As between visiting Kashmir when my people need me there and being Prime Minister, I prefer the former."

The situation had by now become thoroughly scrambled. Gandhiji scribbled a note to the Sardar :

"I have already written to you that I am not going to Kashmir, but Jawaharlal will instead. Just now I have a letter from the Viceroy saying that I should go but not Jawaharlal. I feel absolutely at sea. What should I do?"

The note was delivered to the Sardar by his daughter while he was attending a committee meeting. He wrote back :

"I need time to think. Therefore, you can't leave tomorrow. We shall think it over tomorrow and then decide."

The only effect of these last minute developments was to postpone Gandhiji's departure for Kashmir from 29th to the 30th July.

—*M. Gandhi — The Last Phase* : Vol. II, pp. 350-54.

143. IN FULFILMENT OF A PROMISE

On July 29, 1947, Gandhiji told the prayer audience that he was leaving for Kashmir the next day, and further said :

The talk of my going to Kashmir has been going on for a long time. I am not very keen to go there, although everyone should wish to visit that beautiful place. I am going as a matter of duty, in order to fulfil the promise made to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I met the late Maharaja of Kashmir at the Kumbha Mela at Hardwar. The Maharaja invited me to visit Kashmir. But I had no time then. In 1938, I was the guest of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan at Abbottabad. Sir N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar was then the Prime Minister of Kashmir. He had invited me to go to Kashmir. It was almost decided that I would go. But I could not. In 1945, there was the Simla

Conference. Important negotiations were going on at Delhi, in which Pandit Jawaharlal was the chief participant. He went on what was to be a day's visit to Kashmir. But being a born fighter, he got caught in a fight with the State authorities and could not return. Maulana Saheb was the President of the Congress. He was upset and so was Lord Wavell that Jawaharlal was held up. I told Maulana Saheb to send a telegram to Jawaharlal to return immediately. His commitment would be taken up by the Congress and that, if need be, I would go instead. As a disciplined soldier that he was, Pandit Jawaharlal returned. When, therefore, over a month ago, Jawaharlal Nehru felt that he should pay a flying visit to Kashmir, I offered to go in his place provided the Viceroy had no objection to it. The Viceroy advised me to postpone my visit. After the protracted delay, it became a question as to who should go now. It was felt that Jawaharlal's visit would be more open to misinterpretation than mine. As a matter of fact, neither have any intention of influencing the decision, as to joining one dominion or the other. And so far as I am concerned, I know what Jawaharlal wanted to go for. He did not want to let the workers in Kashmir feel that they were neglected. Jawaharlal belongs to Kashmir. I am connected with Kashmir as President of the A.-I.S.A. I am not going to Kashmir to secure Sheikh Abdullah's release. I am surely going to see Begum Abdullah. I have no wish to see the Kashmir functionaries, although I am courteous enough not to object to any such proposal. I would certainly like to see common men and women of Kashmir, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. So far as the accession to the dominions is concerned, I am firmly of opinion, that it is the *ryots* who should decide, not the rulers. The British Government are a paramountcy imposed. The real paramountcy is inherently vested in the *ryots*. My visit to Kashmir is thus in fulfilment of the promise referred to by me. I have no wish to address public meeting.

—*Harijan* : August 10, 1947.

144. REPORT OF KASHMIR VISIT

Gandhiji sent a report on August 6, 1947 of his 3 days' Kashmir visit to Pandit Nehru to be shared with the Sardar as follows :

"No public prayer was held on the day of arrival (August 1, 1947), but I appeared before them twice or thrice and said that I could not make any public speech, not because there was any prohibition but because I had promised to myself that if I was to make my visit devoid of political significance in so far as it was possible, I must not address public meetings.... The Prime Minister... told me that he had no objection whatsoever to public prayers.... Consequently, public prayers were held during the two days following in Srinagar and the third in Jammu.

"During the two interviews with the Prime Minister, I told him about his unpopularity among the people. . . He wrote to the Maharaja. . . that on a sign from him he would gladly resign... The Maharaja had sent me a message. . . that the Maharaja and the Maharani were anxious to see me. I met them... The heir-apparent with his leg in plaster was also present... Both admitted that, with the lapse of British Paramountcy, the true Paramountcy of the people of Kashmir would commence. However much they might wish to join the Union, they would have to make the choice in accordance with the wishes of the people. How they could be determined was not discussed at that interview....

"Bakshi (Ghulam Mohammed) was not sanguine that the result of the free vote of the people, whether on the adult franchise or on the existing register, would be in favour of Kashmir joining the Union provided, of course, that Sheikh Abdullah and his co-prisoners were released, all bans were removed and the present Prime Minister was not in power. Probably, he echoed the general sentiment. I studied the Amritsar Treaty, pro-

perly called "sale deed". I presume it lapses on the 15th instant. To whom does the State revert? Does it not go to the people?"

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 357.

145. ABOUT THE USE OF VICEREGAL PALACE

While in post-war England and France, they were adopting rigorous austerity budgets and slashing all unnecessary expenditure, the Union Government in the exuberance of its new-found independence was doing the opposite.

"We are going in for British extravagance which the country cannot afford," wrote Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru in one of his letters (dated July 17, 1947). A few days later (on July 28, 1947), he again wrote: "I feel that the Viceroy should be allowed to go to an unpretentious house and that the present palace should be more usefully used." Pandit Nehru agreed. Mountbatten was willing—even enthusiastic. "May I say," wrote Gandhiji to Mountbatten, "how deeply I have appreciated your wish to go to an unpretentious house as the chosen Governor-General of the millions of the half-famished villagers of the nation. I hope it will be possible to carry out the wishes." But, explained Pandit Nehru in a letter written on the same day, "difficulty in finding suitable accommodation and making arrangements for changing over, when we are so busy" stood in the way. That could not have been the whole reason, for even after the installation of the Indian Governor-General, no change was made either in the residence or the style of its upkeep. We were even told that the standard maintained at the Government House was considered "inadequate" by foreign dignitaries.

Gandhiji was disappointed, but he distilled "the soul of goodness" even out of his disappointment. During the hectic days when Delhi had become the City of the Dead, he was, in the course of a meeting with the Governor-General, shown how the Government House provided a quiet retreat for the Emergency Committee to meet and hold its deliberations away from the riots and clamour of the streets. Recalling his earlier advice to Mountbatten, he remarked to him: "Never mind

the reason why you did not move to a smaller house. When I see the Emergency Committee at work in the undisturbed tranquillity of this place, I say to myself : 'Perhaps God was wiser than us all. For, it is but right that the Emergency Committee should be able to meet in a place where wise decisions can be taken in the right atmosphere.'"

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 641.

146. IS THE TRI-COLOUR GONE ?

The Hyderabad correspondent writes :

"This flag was the mainstay of our struggle. The Constituent Assembly has committed a grave blunder by traducing the spinning wheel. The *Ashoka Chakra* has nothing in common with it. It is contrary to all that the spinning wheel stands for. Gandhiji's wheel has nothing to do with religion. The innovation is a sign of Hinduism. The spinning wheel is the sign of non-violent economics. The new one is the *Sudarshan Chakra*, a sure sign of violence. Thus, says Shri Munshi in his broadcast. Thus, it is said, Hinduism will be sustained by violence. A deliberate attempt is being made in that direction. This will never bring Pakistan nearer to us, but will put it off from us."

I have not read the speech attributed to Shri Munshi. Assuming that he has expressed these sentiments, let us hope he does not represent the opinion of the masses. Pandit Jawaharlal, who moved the resolution on the Flag, said definitely that the wheel which is undoubtedly a copy of the Ashoka wheel was meant to represent the spinning wheel.* Maharaja Ashoka was a Buddhist and he represented in his person non-

* "I must say that if the Flag of the Indian Union will not contain the emblem of the *Charkha*, I will refuse to salute that Flag. The National Flag of India was first thought of by me and I cannot conceive of India's National Flag without the emblem of the *Charkha*. We have, however, been told by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others that the sign of the wheel or *chakra* in the new National Flag symbolizes the *Charkha* also."

—*Mahatma* : Vol. VIII, p. 81.

violence on which his edicts were based. He was the one Emperor who renounced the fruits of victory and attempted to rule by the force of love, not by that of the sword. One can thus extend the meaning not inconsistent with the original. Lastly, in my opinion, *Sudarshan* did not represent the force of arms. But I confess that here I am on debatable ground. All I can say is that, if the present design does not represent the original and represents something contrary, my head would refuse to bow to the new Flag. Let me hope that the correspondent is unnecessarily nervous about things happening around us.

—*Harijan* : August 17, 1947.

147. CRUMBLING HEAVENS

What Gandhiji had feared all along, and prophesied again and again to unheeding ears, happened at last. The heavens began to crumble in the Punjab. On 17th August, he received the following wire at Calcutta :

“Since Monday a terrible massacre of the Hindus has been in progress in Lahore city, surpassing Rawalpindi. Hundreds of dead are lying strewn on the roads. Anarkali bazar and other business quarters have been burnt down. The greater part of the city is in flames. Water supply in Hindu residential quarters has been cut off. The trapped Hindus, who tried to escape, were shot down by the military and the police. More than three hundred Hindus were burnt alive. The Hindus are without food and water. They are threatened with destruction. Do something immediately. Your presence in Lahore is necessary.”

Pandit Nehru had gone on the 17th August on a two days' visit to the affected areas on receiving the news of the fresh outbreak in the Punjab. On his return to Delhi, he wired to Gandhiji on the 21st August, sending him his “respectful congratulations on the wonderful change in Calcutta” and telling him that the Punjab needed his “healing presence.”

Gandhiji replied on the following day :

"I have got stuck here. Noakhali demands my presence. Bihar, too, will take a few days. Under the circumstances, I do not know when I shall be able to go to the Punjab. You will guide me."

Pandit Nehru wrote back :

"I do not ask you to go to the Punjab immediately. We must face the situation now. Later, I might request you to go there."

But the report he sent about the situation in the Punjab was most disturbing.

Alarming news had begun to come in from other sources, too. A deputation of the Punjabis in Calcutta saw Gandhiji on the 24th August before Pandit Nehru's report had arrived.

Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru :

24th August, 1947.

"Punjabis in Calcutta have been pressing me to go to the Punjab at once. They tell me a terrible story. Thousands have been killed ! A few thousand girls have been kidnapped ! Hindus cannot live in the Pakistan area, nor Muslims in the other portion. Add to this the information that the two wings of the army took sides and worked havoc ! Can any of this be true !

"When do you think I should go to the Punjab, if at all ? I have still work in Calcutta, then in Noakhali and Bihar. But everything can be laid aside to go to the Punjab, if it is proved to be necessary."

Pandit Nehru had, in the meantime, gone on his second visit to the East Punjab. Immediately on his return on the morning of 25th August, he wrote :

Pandit Nehru to Gandhiji :

25th August, 1947.

"In my last letter, I gave you some idea of conditions in the Punjab. This second visit has depressed me even more. . . Normally, even after the worst riots most people stick to their homes. Now, with the coming of Pakistan, the urge to get out of it has added to the normal urge to escape from a dangerous zone.

On both sides of the border in the Punjab, people are affected in this way and mass migrations are taking place on a vast scale. These are largely spontaneous. Inevitably, this is resulting and will result in misery for hundreds of thousands of people. It will also mean a tremendous burden on all Governments concerned, Provincial and Central, on both sides....

"This morning, at a meeting of the Joint Defence Council, Mountbatten urged me to request you to go to Punjab and he hoped that you would repeat your Calcutta miracle there. I told him that I was myself not clear about this. I feel you should go, but not just yet."

Gandhiji to Sardar :

26th August, 1947.

"Great pressure is being put upon me to go to the Punjab. I do not know what I should do. Jawahar, too, writes that I ought to go but not just now. I am fixed up here till Sunday at any rate. After that, the idea is to go to Noakhali and from there to Bihar. All this would take up about fifteen days in any case. I do not know what I shall be able to do in Delhi. I am afraid, I may even prove a hindrance in what you are doing."

The Sardar, it seems, had lost all hope of the Pakistan authorities doing the right by the non-Muslim minorities in West Punjab for lack of will or ability, or both. His mind had begun to move in the direction of exchange of populations. His reply to Gandhiji's inquiry about going to the Punjab echoed that feeling :

"What will you do by going to the Punjab? You can do nothing to put out the conflagration. It is not possible for the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims to live together there ; Hindus might be able to stay there some time in future, not today. But one cannot imagine Sikhs and Muslims living together even in the remote future. The forces have been thoroughly infected. People in their lakhs are fleeing from either side of the border. Terror prevails in the camps. Those who are fleeing are

set upon and done to death. There is no arrangement for their evacuation with safety."

Gandhiji, on the other hand, was emphatic that it was better to perish to the last man bravely than desert the soil made sacred by the dust of one's forefathers. The pressure on him to go to the Punjab continued to grow.

Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru :

29th August, 1947.

"Herewith is a letter from one Sardar Ajit Singh. You will see he is insistent on my going to the Punjab without a moment's delay. You will judge what I should do. Will it be any use my going after life and property are destroyed to the saturation point? Will it not be a mockery? I put before you for consideration the thoughts welling up within me. I have three wires pressing me to go."

Pandit Nehru wired back on the same day:

"I still think that time has not come for you to visit the Punjab, but feel your presence in Delhi very desirable so as to keep in touch with the Punjab situation and advise us."

On the following day, the Sardar sent a further report, but it was clear that neither he nor Pandit Nehru favoured Gandhiji's going to the Punjab just then :

"Yesterday there was a meeting at Lahore. The result was satisfactory. Jinnah and other Leaguers were present. All resolutions were passed unanimously. But it will take time to put out the conflagration. From today, Jawaharlal and Liaquat Ali have commenced touring the Punjab together. The tour will last for a week. Others, too, have commenced touring similarly. Everybody is trying hard. The rest is in God's hands."

The note of complacency in the Sardar's letter disturbed Gandhiji. His colleagues did not seem to know what they were heading for. Gandhiji replied to the Sardar on the same day :

"I have your letter.... May God give you the needed strength and the wisdom. Who would have thought you would have to face an ordeal like this so soon! His will be done!"

A grave error of judgment was being committed. Gandhiji did not wish to embarrass his colleagues by what they might consider unwanted interference. Nonetheless, he felt that he owed it to them to sound a final note of warning.

Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru :

30th August, 1947.

"About my going to the Punjab, I won't move without your and Vallabhbhai's wish. I want to say, however, that everyday pressure is being put upon me to rush to the Punjab before it is too late. If you wish, I would send you all that comes to me in that way so as to enable you to come to a true judgment.

"If I am not going to the Punjab, would I be of much use in Delhi as an adviser or consultant? I fancy I am not built that way. My advice has value only when I am actually working at a particular thing. I can only disturb when I give academic advice as on food, clothing, the use of the military. The more I think, the more I sense the truth of this opinion. Left to myself, I would probably rush to the Punjab and, if necessary break myself in the attempt to stop the warring elements from committing suicide. From a letter I just have from Lord Mountbatten, I get the same impression. He would welcome my immediate going to the Punjab.

On this side, I have work which must help you all."

Gandhiji's letters were redirected by Sardar Patel to Pandit Nehru, who was touring both the Punjabs with Liaquat Ali Khan. What he saw there coupled, perhaps, with Lord Mountbatten's advice, at last decided him. He wired to Gandhiji on the 31st August :

"Punjab problem overwhelming in extent and intensity. I feel now that your presence in Punjab is desirable and would be helpful in curing insanity and bringing solace to this ruined and heart-broken Province. I am

returning to Delhi on 4th. After brief stay, coming back to Punjab."

He followed it by another wire on the 2nd September :

"I feel sure now that you should come to Punjab as early as possible."

The way was thus set clear for Gandhiji to proceed to the Punjab and repeat there the miracle that had been witnessed in Calcutta. But, as on so many previous occasions, Providence had yet another assignment in store for him and he, as always, was content to be as "clay in the hands of the Great Potter."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, pp. 383-393.

148. A NINE DAYS' WONDER

Gandhiji to Sardar Patel :

1st September, 1947.

"Preparations for a fight are today in evidence everywhere. I have just returned after seeing the corpses of two Muslims who have died of wounds. I hear that conflagration has burst out at many places. What was regarded as the "Calcutta miracle" has proved to be a nine days' wonder. I am pondering what my duty is in the circumstances. I am writing this almost at 6 p.m. This letter will leave with tomorrow's post. I shall, therefore, be able to add a postscript to it. There is a wire from Jawahar that I should proceed to the Punjab. How can I go now? I am searching deep within myself. In that, silence helps."

* * * * *

2nd September, 1947.

"Since writing... yesterday, a lot more news has come. A number of people have also come and seen me. I was already pondering within me as to what my duty was. The news that I received clinched the issue for me. I decided to undertake a fast. It commenced

at 8.15 last evening. Rajaji came last night. I patiently listened to all that he had to say. He exhausted all the resources of his logic.... But none of his arguments went down with me.... Let no one be perturbed. Perturbation won't help. If the leaders are sincere, the killing will stop and the fast end; and if the killing continues, what use is my life? If I cannot prevent people from running amock, what else is left for me to do? If God wants to take work from this body, He will enter into the people's hearts, bring them round to sanity and sustain my body. In His name alone was my fast undertaken. May God sustain and protect you all. In this conflagration, others will not be able to help much."

On receiving another wire from Pandit Nehru calling him to the Punjab, Gandhiji commented: "I now feel happy and at peace because I am doing what my duty requires of me." In answer to Pandit Nehru's wire, he wrote:

Gandhiji to Pandit Nehru:

2nd September, 1947.

"I would have started for Lahore today, but for the flare up in Calcutta. If the fury did not abate, my going to the Punjab would be of no avail. I would have no self-confidence. If the Calcutta friendship was wrong, how could I hope to affect the situation in the Punjab? Therefore, my departure from Calcutta depends solely upon the results of the Calcutta fast. Don't be distressed or angry over the fast."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase*: Vol. II, pp. 405, 409-10.

149. IF ONLY JINNAH HAD ACCEPTED MY OFFER

I have often asked why there should be any further trouble now that the League and Jinnah have got what they wanted. If only Jinnah had accepted my offer embodied in the Rajaji Formula, all this could have been avoided.... I

was prepared to go even further. If after the British had quitted, the collective wisdom and statesmanship of India were still unable to achieve a peaceful solution, I would have invited the Muslim League to take charge of the Government. The Congress Ministers would have made way for them, if I had asked them to. Pandit Nehru and the Sardar had told me that they would carry out my orders if I took over command.

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 413.

150. THE CITY OF THE DEAD

On the morning of the 9th September, 1947, Gandhiji arrived in Delhi from Calcutta never to leave again. At the railway station, he was met by Sardar Patel, for the first time without his usual smile and apt pungent joke. He missed, too, some other familiar faces at the station. Arrangements for his reception had been kept a secret even from close friends.

Delhi had become the city of the dead. In the car, the Sardar gave him the news. Since the 4th September, communal riots had broken out in the Capital.

Another surprise awaited him. He was not taken to the Sweepers' Colony where he used to stay. He was motored straight to Birla House instead. The Sweepers' Colony was occupied by the refugees from West Punjab. They would have to be displaced, if Gandhiji stayed there.

Hardly had his car arrived at Birla House, when Pandit Nehru drove up. As he gave Gandhiji news, his face was pinched and furrowed by care, overstrain and lack of sleep. A twenty-four hour curfew was in force in the city. The military had been called, but firing and looting had not stopped altogether. The streets were littered with the dead. Pandit Nehru was indignant. "The wretches have created chaos in the whole city. What can we say to Pakistan now?"

Gandhiji : "What is the use of being angry?"

Pandit Nehru : "I am angry with myself. We go about with armed guards under elaborate security measures. It is a disgrace. Ration shops have been looted. Fruits, vegetables

and provisions are difficult to obtain. What must be the plight of the ordinary citizen? Dr. Joshi, the famous surgeon who knew no distinction between Hindu and Muslim but served both alike, was fired upon from a Muslim house while he was proceeding to visit a patient and was killed."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 431.

151. JAWAHARLAL—A REAL JEWEL

To the people I appeal once again to be loyal and faithful to their Governments and strengthen them or dismiss them which they have every right to do. Jawaharlal is a real *Jawahar* (Jewel). He can never be party to *Hindu Raj*, nor can the Sardar, who has championed Muslim friends. Though I call myself a *Sanatani* Hindu, I am proud of the fact that the late Imam Saheb of South Africa had accompanied me to India on my return and died in the Sabarmati Ashram. His daughter and son-in-law are still at Sabarmati. Am I or the Sardar to throw them overboard? My Hinduism teaches me to respect all religions. In this lies the secret of *Rama Raj*. If Jawaharlal, the Sardar and people with their ideas have forfeited your respect and confidence, you can replace them by another team that has your confidence. But you cannot and should not expect them to act against their conscience and regard that India belongs only to the Hindus. That way lies destruction.

—*Harijan* : October 19, 1947.

152. DUTY OF BANISHING HATRED

Pandit Jawaharlal has just returned from seeing wounded Kashmir. He has been unable to attend the Working Committee meetings either yesterday or today in the afternoon. He has brought me some flowers from Baramula. These gifts of Nature are always beautiful. But the beauty of that lovely country is today marred by the shedding of blood and loot. I had gone to Jammu, too, where all was not well.

In order to bring about peace and goodwill throughout the land, it is the duty of everyone to banish hatred and suspicion from their hearts. No victory in Kashmir or in Junagadh would avail if we did not feel the existence of God within us and forget all our petty internal differences.

—*Harijan* : November 23, 1947.

153. HELPING HANDS AT HARVESTING

The Secretary of a Provincial Congress Committee, who is a farmer himself, came to me and said that, while formerly all men and women in the villages used to lend a helping hand at harvesting time, today the farmers had to hire labour for that purpose. That increased the cost of foodgrains and removed the spirit of free and willing co-operation, which was an asset in itself. I know of the good custom. I advise all, with all the emphasis at my command, to practise it.

The Secretary also said that at least the Food Minister, if not most, should be *kisans*. It is unfortunate that today none of the Ministers are *kisans*. The Sardar is born in a farmer's family and though he knows something about agriculture, he has become a barrister by profession. Our Prime Minister is a learned man, a great historian and a great writer, but he knows nothing about agriculture and farming. The other Ministers are all well-to-do men, who have never worked on the land. Yet more than 80% of India's population consists of *kisans*. Only a *kisan* knows how to increase production and the fertility of the land. Only he can understand the whys and wherefores of profiteering by the *kisans* and overcome the evil. In democracy, the *kisan* should be the ruler. I would certainly like to push forward an honest and capable *kisan*. Such a *kisan* would not know English. I would ask Jawaharlal to be his (the *kisan's*) secretary and see the foreign Ambassadors on his Chief's behalf and take pride in such service. Such a *kisan* Prime Minister would not ask for a palace to live in. He would live in a mud hut, sleep under the sky and work on the land during the day whenever he is free. The whole picture would change immediately. In

Panchayat Raj, the man who should count most in India is naturally the *kisan*. How to advance him is the question.

—*Harijan* : December 7, 1947.

154. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

We have our own Government, but we are not prepared to obey them. Pandit Jawaharlal has said that he would rather be called the First Servant of the Nation than the Prime Minister. Are all Government officials really servants of the people? If so, there would be no scope for luxuries. They would then all be for ever thinking of the people and their needs. That would mean *Rama Raj* or the Kingdom of God on Earth. That would be real and complete independence. The independence of today stifles me. It is unreal and unstable.

—*Harijan* : December 14, 1947.

155. THE JEWEL OF INDIA !

Gandhiji broke the fast* on the 18th January, 1948, at 12.45 p.m., by receiving the glass of orange juice (8 ounces with glucose 1 ounce) at the hands of Maulana Azad. Pandit Nehru's eyes were wet with tears.

The gathering then dispersed, but Pandit Nehru stayed on. It was only then that he revealed to Gandhiji that he had been fasting with him from the day before. He had kept it as a closely guarded secret even from members of his own

* "From the time that he had returned to Delhi, after his Calcutta Fast, Gandhiji had never ceased asking himself where his duty lay in the face of what was happening. There was no answer he could give to the Muslims who came to him day after day and week after week with their tales of woe... He could not get the authorities to do more, and what they had succeeded in doing was in his eyes not enough. Perhaps, circumstanced as they were, they were not in a position to do more. He felt resourceless and resourcelessness in the face of a moral challenge he could not stand. Out of the depth of his anguish came the decision to fast (on 12th January, 1947)."

—*M. Gandhi—The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 701.

household. Gandhiji was deeply moved. As soon as Pandit Nehru had left, he scribbled a note for Pandit Nehru and gave it to be delivered to him personally. The note read :

“Now break your fast... May you live for many long years and continue to be the Jawahar (the jewel) of India !

Bapu's Blessings”

—M. Gandhi—*The Last Phase* : Vol. II, p. 731.

156. THE SWARAJ GOVERNMENT

The *Swaraj* Government is bound to proceed with firmness and courage. A Government which is weak or which allows itself to be led into courses which its reason does not approve of, is not fit to rule. It ought to step aside and make way for a better one. To say or to believe that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel have weakened under my influence is to betray gross ignorance of their character. And if my influence has really the enervating effect imputed to it, it is a thing for me to be ashamed of and for the country to deplore as detrimental to its very existence.

—*Harijan* : February 1, 1948.

157. PRIME MINISTER'S NOBLE GESTURE

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is doing all that is possible in order to bring Hindu and Sikh refugees speedy relief. His heart bleeds for them. He is a man who would offer his own bedding to one in distress and pace up and down the whole night in order to keep himself warm. His house is full. Being the Prime Minister of India, he has to accommodate guests, both Indians and foreigners. Still, he has expressed a wish to offer one or two rooms in his house to lodge refugees. He expects other Ministers, officials and men of means to do likewise. I am convinced that this act of self-sacrifice on the part of India's foremost leader would be appreciated all the world over and put a speedy end to the sufferings of the homeless refugees. It should gladden our hearts to note that this beauti-

ful land of ours has produced such great men, endowed with such a wonderful spirit of service and self-sacrifice. Jawahar is a real *Jawahar* (gem) and there are others, only not so lustrous perhaps. If our leaders are doing all this for the people, it behoves us not to hurt our Muslim brethren. To hurt them is to hurt our leaders.

—*Harijan* : February 1, 1948.

158. PANDIT NEHRU'S EXAMPLE

A friend has written to me that although Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other Ministers and the officials might lodge some refugees in their houses, that would not even touch the fringe of the refugee problem. I agree that the Ministers and the officials together cannot house more than a few thousands at the most. The virtue of the offer consists not in the number so to be accommodated, but in the fact that the example of the leaders doing the act is proving infectious. The British people appreciate the least act of self-denial on the part of the King for the sake of the people. All civilized people would appreciate and value such acts of leaders of men. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has set an example before the whole country. That this is so is proved from the fact that more refugees are being attracted to Delhi. They feel evidently that they would be best treated in Delhi. While it is proof of the popularity of Panditji's example, it is proof also that we have not learnt the art of self-restraint.

—*Harijan* : February 1, 1948.



INDEX

- Abbotabad, 192.
 Abdul Bari, 4.
 Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 47, 84,
 164, 174, 180, 192.
 Abdullah, Begam, 193.
 ———, Sheikh, 155-6, 182,
 189, 193-4.
 Adult education, 76.
 Afghan Delegation, 1-3,
Ahimsa, See NON-VIOLENCE.
 Ajit Singh, 200.
 Allahabad, 63, 103, 107, 124.
 All-India Congress Committee,
 8, 28, 70, 108, 122, 124, 130,
 133, 135, 185.
 ———, Resolution on War, 132.
 ———, Spinners' Association, 21,
 80, 83.
 ———, States Peoples' Confer-
 ence, 99, 161.
 Aligarh, 29.
 Ambalal, Seth, 10.
 Ambedkar, Dr., 51.
 America, 131.
 ———, effect of industrializa-
 tion on, 110.
 ———, Gandhiji's contemplated
 visit to, 41.
 Amrit Kaur, Rajkumari, 165.
 Amritsar, 190.
Anand Bhavan, 34, 64, 94.
 Andrews, C. F., 49, 175.
 Ansari, Dr., 11, 48.
 Armaments, 102.
 Asaf Ali, 125, 128.
 Ashoka, Maharaja, 196.
 Asia, 175-7.
 ———, United, Jawaharlal's dream
 of, 177.
 Asian Institute, Gandhiji's views
 on, 175.
 Assamese, 90.
 Attlee, 171-2.
 Aundh, 160.
 Ayyangar, Gopalaswamy, 192.
 Azad, Abul Kalam, 109, 113,
 125, 131, 145, 155, 158, 182,
 184, 193, 207.
 Bacon, Lord, 49.
 Badshah Khan, See ABDUL
 GHAFFAR KHAN.
 Bahraich, 19.
 Bajaj, Jammalal, 61, 63, 77.
 Banker, Shankarlal, 64.
 Baramula, 205.
 Bardoli, 13, 130.
 ———, Resolution, Gandhiji's
 speech on, 113.
 Bardoloi, 129, 132.
 Basic Hindustani, 92.
 Basti, 32.
 Belgaum, 26.
 Benares, 117.
Bible, 78.
 Bihar, 170, 173, 182, 198.
 ———, communal riots in, 164,
 166.
 Body, perishable nature of, 51.
 Bombay, 24, 62, 67, 86, 103,
 128, 130.
 ———, communal riots in, 46.
 Bose, Subash Chandra, 27.
 Boycott, of British goods, 11.
 ———, of foreign cloth, 10.
 Britain, 131.
 ———, appeal to, for grant of in-
 dependence to India, 140.
 ———, appeal to, for withdrawal
 from India, 129.
 ———, black deeds of, 16.
 British Empire, 16, 116.
 ———, Government, 54.
 ———, Imperialism, 102, 124, 140.
 ———, Paramountcy, 194.
 ———, withdrawal from India,
 121, 133, 138, 140.
 Brockway, Fenner, 7.

- Buddha, Lord, 108.
 Burma, 87, 142.
 —, Gandhiji's contemplated visit to, 10.

 Cabinet Mission, 155-6, 169.
 Calcutta, 164-6, 198, 202.
 — fast, by Gandhiji, 202-3, 207.
 — miracle, 199, 202.
 Cambridge, 32, 49, 182.
 Capital, and capitalists, 84.
 Capitalism, 85.
 Carlyle, 143.
 Chakravarty, Dr., 170.
 Chakrayya, 182.
Charkha, See SPINNING WHEEL.
 Chiang-kai-Shek, Gandhiji's letter to, 146.
 China, 123, 131, 140-1, 175.
 —, Gandhiji's love for, 146.
 —, Jawaharlal's love for, 146.
 Christ, Jesus, 78, 118.
 Christianity, 51.
 Churchill, Vincent, 116.
 Civil disobedience, 54, 56, 115.
 — Liberties Union, 70.
 Civilization, modern, 151.
 Class war, 60-1, 74, 83.
 Communal problem, 104.
 Communists, home-truths to, 183.
 Communism, 61, 74.
 Congress, See INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.
 Congress Working Committee, 60, 114, 156-7, 169, 172, 174, 178.
 — — —, divided counsels in, 101.
 — — —, Statement of, on War crisis, 99.
 Congressmen, and corruption, 97.
 —, and non-violence, 107.
 —, duty of, 117, 119.
 Constituent Assembly, 104, 159-62, 171-2.

 Constructive Programme, 115, 138.
 — work, 28, 57.
 Conversion, by persuasion, 76.
 Criminal Investigation Dept., 16-7.
 Cripps, Stafford, 127, 130-1, 133, 136, 155.
 — Mission, 130.
 — Proposals, 127, 129, 136.
 Curtis, Lionel, 76.

 Dandi, 35.
 — March, 34.
Davidranarayana, 43, 95.
 Das, Biswanath, 129, 132.
 Death, 52.
 Delhi, 48, 62-3, 88, 156-7, 155-73, 178, 188-9, 193, 195, 200-5, 209.
 — fast, Gandhiji's, 207.
 — Pact, See GANDHI-IRWIN PACT.
 Democracy, 101-2, 143.
 Deo, Narendra, 131-2.
 —, Shankerrao, 132.
 Desai, Bhulabhai, 127, 132.
 —, Mahadev, 36, 51, 85.
 Devanagri, 89.
 —, script, 91.
 Disarmament, 143.
 Discipline, 181.
 Dominion Status *v.* Independence, 13.

 Economy, of abundance, 95.
 Ends and means, 56.
 England, 101.
 —, defeat of, Gandhiji does not wish for, 111.
 —, Gandhiji's contemplated visit to, 43.
 —, people of, 181.
 Englishmen characteristics of, 2.
 —, Gandhiji's friendship for, 111, 142.
 Eton, Gandhiji's visit to, 49.
 Europe, Gandhiji's contemplated visit to, 10-11.

Faith, 36.

Falsehood in War Time, by Ponsonby, 16.

Famine, Jawaharlal on, 19.

Fascism, 140.

Father's Letters to His Daughter, by Jawaharlal Nehru, 24.

Fasting, and prayer, 45.

Federation, 96-7.

Fischer, Louis, 159.

Foreign cloth, boycott of, 10-11.

France, 101.

Free India, President's qualifications, 182-3.

Freedom, Gandhiji's conception of, 120.

French Revolution, 143.

Gandhi, Devadas, 50.

—, Feroze, 117.

—, Indira, 50, 63, 89.

—, —, engagement of, 117.

—, —, letters to, from Jawaharlal, 23.

—, Manu, 167.

—, M. K., 23.

—, —, acknowledges Jawaharlal as his Guru in foreign affairs, 143.

—, —, addresses Inter-Asian Relations Conference, 176.

—, —, appeals to people for loyalty to the National Govt., 205.

—, —, asks Jawaharlal to be of good cheer, 30.

—, —, characterises Jawaharlal as 'Jewel of India', 157, 209.

—, —, —, as 'Uncrowned King of India', 163, 181-2.

—, —, chooses Jawaharlal as his 'Legal Heir and Successor', 114-5, 119, 147.

—, —, claims friendship with Englishmen, 111, 142.

—, —, contemplates 'fast

unto death' over Bihar tragedy, 166.

—, —, delivers home-truths to Communists, 185.

—, —, denies charge of rivalry between him and Jawaharlal, 147.

—, —, emphasises heart-union with Jawaharlal, 98.

—, —, his agony over India's Partition, 180.

—, —, his correspondence with Lord Mountbatten over his Kashmir visit, 188-92.

—, —, his differences with Jawaharlal, 7, 9, 55, 72, 77, 80, 84, 98, 101, 148, 152.

—, —, his draft of Congress Resolution on War, 132.

—, —, his faith in non-violence, 120.

—, —, his fight against Sanatanists, 50.

—, —, his letter to Marshal Chiang-kai-Shek, 146.

—, —, his letter to Motilal Nehru, 35.

—, —, his letters to Vallabhbhai Patel, 199, 202.

—, —, his letters to Jawaharlal Nehru, 6-7, 9-10, 23-4, 29, 34, 49, 51-2, 62, 69, 74, 84-5, 88, 101, 112, 148-9, 152, 165, 169, 171, 194, 198, 200-1, 203.

—, —, his love and regard for Jawaharlal, 6, 61, 73.

—, —, his report on Kashmir visit, 194.

—, —, his tribute to Jawaharlal, 28, 31, 34-5, 47, 52-3, 58, 79, 100, 109, 115, 169, 185, 205, 207-9.

—, —, his visit to London for Round Table Conference, 48.

—, —, humour of, 168.

—, —, Jawaharlal's letters to, 172, 191, 198.

Gandhi M. K., Jawaharlal's tribute to, 170.
 —, —, on his influence with Congressmen, 97.
 —, —, on his loin-cloth, 43.
 —, —, on self, 48, 72, 143.
 —, —, on Socialism, 58, 60, 74.
 —, —, places before Lord Mountbatten his plan of Indian Freedom, 174.
 —, —, pleads for India's and Africa's freedom, 145.
 —, —, predicts withdrawal of the British from India, 80.
 —, —, recommends Jawaharlal for the Presidentship of the Lahore Congress of 1929, 111, 142.
 —, —, undertakes fast over communal riots in the wake of partition of India, 202.
 Gandhi-Jawaharlal Correspondence (1933), 53.
 Gandhi-Irwin Pact, 39, 43.
 Geneva, 62.
 Germans, 112.
 Germany, 139.
 Ghosh, P. C., 132.
 Ghulam Mohammed, Bakshi, 194.
 Gidwani, A. T., 6.
 Gita, 78, 83, 115, 177.
 God, 45, 48, 173, 176.
 —, Kingdom of, 207.
 Conda, famine in, 17.
 Goondaism, 45.
 Govt. of India's Press Note re; A.I.C.C.'s Resolution on War, 123.
 Guerilla warfare, 119-20.
 Gujarat Vidyapith, 158.
 Gujarati, 90.
 — script, 91.
 Gurmukhi script, 88.
 Hallows, B. J. K., 18-9.
 Handicrafts, Jawaharlal on, 65.
 Han Liwu, Dr., 175.

Harijan, 50.
 — movement, 51.
 Hardwar, 192.
 Hari Singh, Maharaja, 155, 187-92.
 Harrow, 49, 182.
 Hindi, 90.
 — Sahitya Sammelan, 89.
 — Urdu question, 85, 89-90.
 Hinduism, 51, 118, 205.
 Hindustani, 89-90, 92.
 Hoar, Sir Samuel, 102.
 Humanity, 112.
 Hutheesing, Krishna, 50, 52.
 Independence, Gandhiji's conception of, 114, 160.
 —, Day, 36.
 — v. Dominion Status, 13.
 Independent, The, 4.
 India, freedom of, 145, 148-9, 154, 173.
 —, mission of, 176.
 —, partition of, 102, 179-80, 184-5.
 —, of Gandhiji's conception, 112.
 Indian Army, 133.
 — languages, 90, 92.
 — National Congress, 6, 20, 28.
 — — —, and famines, 21.
 — — —, and Ministries, 38-9.
 — — —, and Princes, 99.
 — — —, and riots, 165.
 — — —, creed of, 13, 60-1.
 — — —, Lahore Session of, 32.
 — — —, message of, 98.
 — — —, policy of, 58, 108.
 — — —, politics of, 16.
 — Penal Code, 3.
 — Republic President, qualifications for, 182-3.
 — villages, 76.
 Indu, See GANDHI INDIRA.

Industrialism, Gandhiji's views on, 88, 110.
 —, Jawaharlal's faith in and views on, 65, 67, 77.
 Inter-Asian Relations Conference, 175.
 Islam, 51.

Jairamdas Doulatram, 130, 132.
 Jammu, 194, 205.
 Japan, 124, 127, 129, 131, 133, 139, 141.
 Japanese invasion, 119-20, 130-1, 134, 138.
 Jinnah, Mohammed Ali, 24, 103, 130, 174, 185, 187, 189, 200, 203.
 Jcshi, Chhaganlal, 51.
 —, Dr., murder of, 205.
 Journalism, 178.
 Junagadh, 206.

Kak, Pandit, 189-91.
 Kalka, 48.
 Kannada, 90.
 Karachi Congress, 40, 55, 60.
 —, Resolution on Fundamental Rights, 53.
 Kashmir, 182, 187-92.
 —, Gandhiji's visit to, reasons for, 193.
 —, Gandhiji's report on his visit to, 194.
 —, Jawaharlal's visit to, 155, 205.
 —, National Conference 155-6, 187.
 Karturbhai, Seth, 10.
Khadi, 10-11, 27.
 —, characterised by Jawaharlal as 'Livery of Freedom', 86-7.
 —, Jawaharlal on, 65, 67, 69, 80.
 —, mentality, what it means, 88.
 —, v. mill-made cloth, 83.
 —, workers, advice to, 122.
 Khan Saheb, See ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN.

Kidwai, Rafi Ahmed, 122.
Kisan, place of, in a democracy, 206.
 Kohala, 156.
 Kripalani, J. B., 125-6, 132, 158.
 Krishina, Lord, 78.

Lahore, 190, 200, 203.
 — Congress, 32, 38.
 — riots, 197.
 Lajpat Rai, Lala, 10.
 Lalji, Seth, 10-11.
 Language, 114.
 —, of the soul, 78.
 —, problem, 88.
 Latin script, 91.
 League Against Imperialism, 18, 20, 22.
 Lecler, Miss, 73.
 Left Book Club, London, 96.
Letters to Indira, by Jawaharlal, Gandhiji's comment on, 23.
 Liaquat Ali, 200-1.
 Life, spiritual, 78.
 Linlithgow, Lord, 79.
 London, 42-3, 47-9, 96.
 Lucknow, 13-5, 33, 63-4, 72.
 — Jail, 4.

Madhupur, 170.
 Madras, 86.
Madras Mail, The, 58.
 Majority v. Minority, 108.
 Malaviya, Pt. Madan Mohan, 13, 47.
 Malaya, 87, 142.
 Malayalam, 90.
 Man, 153, 176.
 Mangaldas, Seth, 10.
 Marathi, 90.
 — script, 91.
 Marriage, inter-religious, 117-8.
 Mathews, Basil, 76.
 Means and ends, 56.
 Medium, of instruction, 92.
 Meerut, 18.
 Meherally, Yusuf, 86.
 Mehta, Dr. Jivaraj, 104.

Minorities Problem, Jawaharlal on, 36-9.
 Miraben, 75, 124, 139.
 Mohammed, Prophet, 118.
 Moses, 118.
 Mountbatten, Lord, 172, 174-5, 186, 195, 199, 201.
 —, Gandhiji defends Governor-Generalship of, 186.
 —, Gandhiji's letter to, 173.
 —, his correspondence with Gandhiji, 187-92.
 —, his correspondence with Maharaja Hari Singh, 187-92.
 Muller, Renu Fulop, 93.
 Munshi, K. M., 196.
 Muslim League, 103, 105, 129, 168, 172, 187-8, 203-4.
 Muslim Leaguers, 174.
 Muslims, of India, not a separate nation, 185.
 Mussoorie, 48.
 —, Jawaharlal's externment from, 1.
 Nabha, 5-6.
 Naidu, Sarojini, 24, 47, 70, 129, 132.
 Nanak, Guru, 118.
 National expenditure, plea for economy in, 39.
 — Flag, 196.
National Herald, The, 122.
 National planning, Gandhiji's views on, 110.
 — Week, 30.
 Nationalism, 131.
 — v. Internationalism, 55.
 Nayar, Pyarelal, 75, 86.
 Nehru Committee, 13.
 — Gandhi Correspondence, 53.
 — Jawaharlal, a 'Jewel among men', 146.
 —, a 'Jewel of India', 157, 208-9.
 —, a 'Legal Heir and Successor' to Gandhiji, 114-5, 119.
 —, an 'internationalist', 153.

Nehru, Jawaharlal, an 'Uncrowned King of India', 163, 181-2.
 —, and non-violence, 93.
 —, and Socialism, 58, 64-5.
 —, characterises *Khadi* as 'Livery of Freedom', 86-7.
 —, externment of, from Mussoorie, 1.
 —, Gandhiji chooses him for Individual *Satyagraha*, 112.
 —, Gandhiji recommends him for election to the Lahore Congress Presidency, 12, 25.
 —, Gandhiji's letters to, 6-7, 9-10, 23-4, 29, 34, 49, 51-2, 62, 69, 74, 84-5, 88, 101, 112, 148-9, 152, 165, 169, 171, 194, 198, 200-1, 203.
 —, Gandhiji's love and regard for, 7, 61, 73.
 —, Gandhiji's tribute to, 8, 15, 25, 28, 31, 34, 47, 52-3, 58, 79, 100, 109, 115, 119, 143, 147, 169, 185, 205, 207-8.
 —, his conception of village life and economy, 150.
 —, his draft of War Resolution, 150.
 —, his dream of a United Asia, 132, 177.
 —, his essay on Hindi-Urdu question, 90.
 —, his jovial nature, 33.
 —, his letter to Maharaja of Kashmir, 156.
 —, his letters to Gandhiji 149, 172, 191, 198.
 —, his letters to his daughter, 23.
 —, his love for China, 146.
 —, his statement on Gandhi-Jawaharlal Correspondence, 57.
 —, his tribute to Gandhiji, 170.

- Nehru, Jawaharlal, magnetic power of, 78.
 ———, on problem of minorities, 36.
 ———, police assault on, 13.
 Nehru, Kamala, 7, 10, 23-4, 30, 52.
 ———, death of, 62.
 ———, Gandhiji's tribute to, 103.
 ———, Memorial Hospital, 103.
 Nehru, Motilal, 1, 10-11, 14, 35.
 ———, dress of, 43.
 ———, Gandhiji's letter to, 35.
 ———, Gandhiji's tribute to, 12, 34.
 Nehru Report, 13, 38.
 Nehru, Sarup. Rani, death of, 93.
Nehru—Your Neighbour, by P. D. Tandon, 147.
 Newton, 49.
 Noakhali, 166, 171, 173, 189.
 Non-Co-operation, 87, 120, 126, 129, 134, 137, 141.
 Non-violence, 108, 113, 119.
 ———, and Congressmen, 107.
 ———, and Truth, 149.
 Noon, Firoz Khan, 146.
 Oakes, 2.
 Orriya, 90.
 Outlook, scientific, 154.
 Pakistan, 171, 174, 185-6.
Panchyat Raj, 182, 206.
 Pandit, Vijaya Lakshmi, 50, 52.
 Pant, Govind Vallabh, 125, 127-8, 132.
 Partition, of India, 179.
 Patel Vallabhbhai, 12, 44, 46-7, 50, 61, 63, 75, 115, 119, 125, 130, 132, 166, 178-9, 184, 186-7, 190, 192, 200-1, 204-5, 208.
 ———, Gandhiji's letters to, 199, 202.
 Patna, 164, 175, 190.
 Patwardhan, Achyut, 125-6, 130, 132.
 Patabhi, Sitaramaya, 128.
 Poona, 49, 51, 53, 60, 129, 131.
 Porter, Sir Ludovic, 3-4.
 Poverty, of India, 20.
 Prasad, Brij Kishore, 166.
 ———, Rajendra, 63, 75, 114, 127, 129, 132, 170.
 Prayer, and fasting, 45.
 Press, the, 178.
 Princes, Indian, 54-5.
 ———, and the Congress, 99.
 ———, place of, in a Free India, 160.
 Property, nationalization of, 62.
 Punjab, 3, 11, 14, 197-203.
 Punjabi, 88, 90.
 Pushtu, 88, 90.
 'Quit India' Resolution, 172.
 ———, Gandhiji's speech on, 142.
Quran, 78, 115.
 Rajagopalachari, C. R., 50, 85, 114-5, 119-20, 128, 131, 203.
 Rajaji Formula, 203.
Rama Raj, 61, 205, 207.
Ramayana, 83.
 Ras, 34.
 Rawalpindi, 197.
 Religion, 118.
 Repression, 3.
 Republic Army, 6.
 Reynolds, 47.
 Rolland, Romain, 9-10.
 Round Table Conference, London, 54-5, 163.
 Roy, Dr. B. C., 104.
 Russia, 74, 123, 131, 140, 184.
 ———, problem of minorities in, 37.
 Russian Revolution, 143.
 Sabarmati, 6-7, 9-10, 205.
 ——— *Ashram*, 6-7, 9-10, 205.
 San Francisco, 146.
 Sanskrit, 89.
 Sarabhai, Mridula, 158.

- Sarup, See PANDIT VIJAYA LAKSHMI.
 Sastri, Srinivas, 9.
 Satyagraha, 110, 115, 163.
 — Ashram, See SABARMATI ASHRAM.
 Satyagrahi, 83.
 Satyamurti, 129, 132.
 Scorched Earth, policy of, 135.
 Script, common, 89, 91.
 Secrecy, 16, 55-6, 72, 120.
 Self-Government, 105.
 — sufficiency, of villages, 118-9.
 Segaoon See SEVAGRAM.
 Sevagram, 69, 74-7, 84-5, 101, 140.
 Shanti Kumar, 10.
 Shaukat Ali, 51.
 Simla, 44, 47-8, 155.
 Simon Commission, 14, 29.
 Simplicity, 149.
 S. ngapore, 10.
 Sindhi, 88, 90.
 — script, 91.
 Smuts, Field Marshal, 154.
 Socialism, 58, 60, 64, 80, 98.
 —, Jawaharlal on, 58.
 South Africa, 60, 192.
 — —, Indians in, 153.
 — —, White races of, appeal to, 154.
 Spinning, 117, 164.
 — wheel, 79, 149, 154, 196.
 Srinagar, 156, 194.
 Srirampur, 170.
 State, well-regulated, 2.
 Statesman, *The*, 64.
 Students, and national fight, 36.
 Suhrawardy, 179.
 Sympathy, 123.
 Swadeshi League, 10.
 Swaraj, 13, 27-8, 36, 40, 79, 84, 105, 109, 113, 135, 143.
 — *Bhavan*, 103.
 — Government, 208.
 Tamil, 90.
 Tandon, P. D., 147.
 Telugu, 90.
 Tenants, right of, 59.
 Tennyson, 49.
 Thought, regulated, 113.
 Tilak, B. G., 87.
 Toleration, 46.
 Tricolour Flag, 196.
 Truth, 43, 79.
 —, and Non-violence, 149.
 — v. Non-violence, 45.
 United Nations, *The*, 136.
 U. P. National Service, 30.
 Untouchability, 50-1.
 Upanishad, 134.
 Urdu, 90.
 Varanashrama, 51.
 Vedas, the language of, 83.
 Vice, when it is mistaken for virtue, 111.
 Viceregal Palace, use of, 195.
 Victoria Queen, 118.
 Village life, 149.
 Villages, Indian, and self-sufficiency, 118.
 —, of Gandhiji's conception, 149, 153, 160-1.
 Villagers, poverty of, 117.
 Vincent, Sir William, 4.
 Volunteers, 30.
 War Resolution of the Congress, 98.
 Wardha, 63, 84, 101, 112-3, 119, 127.
 Wavell, Lord, 168, 193.
 Wealth, Jawaharlal's views on, 66.
 World Federation, 143.
 Wordsworth, 49.
 Yeravda Central Prison, 49, 51.
 Young India, 8-9.
 Youth, advice to, 29.
 Zamindari system, in U.P., 54.
 Zamindars, 77.
 —, advice to, 61.
 Zoroaster, 118.

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